UNFINISHED RAINBOWS

GEORGE WOOD ANDERSON

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Unfinished Rainbows
And Other Essays

BY

GEORGE WOOD ANDERSON

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I

UNFINISHED RAINBOWS

THE rainbow was only a fragment of an arch because the needed sunshine was withheld. Had the sunlight been permitted to permeate all the atmosphere with its golden glow, the arch would have spanned the entire heavens.

This is the reason why, in hours of sorrow, we do not grasp the fullness of God's promise; we permit the denser clouds of doubt and faithlessness to keep the light of God from shining through our griefs; or, with a little faith, we get a gleam of light that gives us but a tiny fragment of the bow.

While all the operations of this natural world are tokens of God's unfailing thoughtfulness in keeping his covenant with man, a great event has made the rainbow peculiarly the embodiment of that thought. Looking from the narrow window of the wave-tossed ark, upon the silent grandeur of a world slowly arising from the waters of an universal flood, Noah beheld the rainbow and rejoiced in the blest assurance, that, while the things of man are subject to the ravages of time and destruction of contending

elements, the things of God are always stable and secure. The most permanent products of man's hand and mind are soon swept away, but the things of God endure, and continue faithful, in working out their appointed courses. Through storm or calm, events march with steady, unceasing tread, knowing that God's roads are never worn, and God's bridges never tremble and fall. Above the placid, mysterious world, calmly emerging from the muddy, wreck-strewn waters, was the peaceful, radiant bow, smiling in confidence upon him and his companions. The world had changed, but the rainbow was just as it had always been, stately, serene, and unaffrighted. The crumbling, flood-torn earth had not weakened its foundations, the drenching rains had not faded its colors, the hurrying, wind-swept clouds could not disturb it. Though it were made out of hurrying light and drifting mist it would not be swayed or moved even a little. Under its archway walked the guarding angels of God. Over the waters came the clear voice once heard in Eden, uttering the promise, "And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: and I will remember my covenant."

That is a sweeping promise that is literally fulfilled in nature. All clouds carry rainbows. Most of them are never seen by us because we

lack the necessary keenness of vision, or the proper point of view to behold their woven colors; many are only partially seen because something intervenes and prevents a perfect intersection of heavenly sunlight with our earth-born mists; many are within the vision of all observing men; but, whether we see it or not, for every cloud there is a scarf of red and orange and yellow and green and blue and scarlet and purple. So, in spiritual matters, we find that for every sorrow there are beautiful assurances of God's presence and unwavering covenant-keeping power. If we do not see them it is not God's fault, for the light of his faithfulness transfixes every cloud that arises above his earth-born children.

There are the clouds of bereavement. The Death Angel defied your love-locked doors and bolted windows. Heeding neither your cry nor your pleadings, he entered your home and pushed aside the doctor and attending nurses and friends, and touching the heart of your loved one, stilled it to sleep. Your grief was such that you did not see how you could live. The home seemed empty and strangely silent. The entire pathway seemed shrouded in the somber shadows of your grief. Life was a desolation. But you did not give up in despair. There was a bow in the cloud. An arch of seven brilliant

hues reached from one horizon to another horizon, and you knew that the One in whom you had placed your trust had proven true. He had not forgotten you. Looking at the rainbow, the token of his covenant, you read in its mingled colors the words of the Lord Jesus, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." In your sorrow you found that the bow of God's promises never trembles.

You were facing financial disaster. All your investments had proven bad. You had been misled by false counsel. The savings of years had been swept away by one fell swoop of disaster, and with them had gone all the fond plans for the future of your family and loved ones. Your head reeled as you felt the earth giving way beneath you; you were about to close your eyes in despair, when suddenly, in the darkest part of the overshadowing cloud, you saw the rainbow. God had not forgotten you. Amid the whirl and destruction of things his promises never trembled. Its gleaming colors told you that you were not alone, and spelled such a message of hope and inspiration to your soul, that you smiled in the face of adversity. Here was the promise, "There is no want to them that fear Him." You had never seen the beauty of

those words before. You felt the thrill of a new life and the confidence that you once placed in riches, you now centered upon God.

There were the dark clouds of misplaced friendship. You were confident that the one in whom you were placing your trust was worthy, but through that friendship you were betrayed, and misrepresented, and made the object of scorn and criticism. No cloud is darker than that, no sorrow is harder to bear, and yet you did not lose confidence in man. Above the feathered edges of the cloud was the rainbow of God's promise, and you knew that if even father and mother forsook you, the Lord would take you up. The rainbow, as the symbol of God's promise, said: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

But some one says, "I have never been able to grasp the *fullness* of these promises. Amid life's clouds I cannot see the presence of the Almighty." That is not God's fault, but because one hinders the coming of the light. If you do not permit the Spirit of God to shine upon your sorrow with its golden light, the ministration of the rainbow to your sorrow-smitten soul will never be complete. The comforts of God are known only by those who are willing to receive his holy ministrations. The rainbow is never finished for the one who refuses to receive Christ

fully and completely into his life. He is the Light of the world, and his presence always brings the promises of the Father to their fullest possible earthly revelation and application. His revelations are always complete and as comforting as they are beautiful. His clear light of goodness has always been making battle against the darkness of sin's mists and fogs. He is never satisfied until his love has intercepted every overshadowing cloud so that when you behold the streaming banners of the bow, that always follows and never precedes a storm, you may know that you, through him, have already gotten the victory. Light triumphs. The overshadowing cloud is pierced. Instead of somberness there is beauty.

The earthly rainbows will never be complete. Here we behold at best only a segment of a perfect circle. We have but a one-world view and therefore can behold but half the rainbow. In heaven we shall see the completed circle, as John beheld it in his vision and exclaimed, with rapturous delight, "There was a rainbow round about the throne." So glorious is the light of the great, white throne, and the face, and the raiment of Him that sat upon it, that to angelic vision it is nestled in the center of a perfectly rounded bow of brilliant hue.

The rainbow can never be destroyed, for the

light of Christ can never fade. Ever about the throne of God, in perfect circle, shall gleam the steady, colored token of God's faithfulness through all time and all eternity. The multitude of white-robed ones that worship before the throne are those who have come out "of great tribulation," they are those who have "overcome through the blood of the Lamb," therefore it is fitting that the one choicest treasure saved from the natural world in which they fought their battles, and won their victories, should be the rainbow, the richly colored symbol of God's faithfulness and mercy. What emotions thrill our souls in this world when we look upon the rainbow! What memories shall sweep through our souls when we behold the rainbow that is ever round about the great white throne of God!

II

GATHERING SUNSETS

THE sunset is the sheaf of the day's activities, wherein are bound all the roses and poppies and fruits and grains of the passing hours, for the experiences of life are constantly coming to full harvest. Weary with toil and worn with watching, we do not see the riches of to-day; or, stirred by some new ambition, our eyes become so fixed upon the future, that to-day's golden grain is trampled under foot and lost. Instead of facing the morrow's morn, rich with garnered treasures, we greet it with empty hands. We are not householders seeking strong-walled dwellings and broad, extending acres, but are careless, nomadic folk, wandering aimlessly from day to day, as gypsies wander from town to town. Having all things within our grasp, we possess nothing. When touched by the hand of Death, and taken out of life, the world is no more disturbed than by the bursting of a bubble on the ocean wave.

Sunsets are sheaves, and the brilliancy of their coloring is God's way of calling our attention to their value. The waving of so many golden

and scarlet banners, by a myriad of unseen hands, should awaken the most careless soul to the consciousness that something mighty is transpiring. Such banners and pageantry passing through our streets would awaken the entire city to wonderment and concern. For what king are the banners waving? For what worthy cause are all these ensigns thrown upon the wind? What victory is celebrated here? Yet the sunsets pass unheeded, and the golden sheaf of another day is trampled under careless feet, and left to mildew and decay.

The art of gathering sunsets, the grasping of each day's experiences with firm and constant hold, is one to covet. Days are not something to "pass through." Each day is like unto an acre of land, through which one may hurry, as in a train, without thought of right or ownership; or unto an acre of land which he holds in perpetual ownership, adding that much to his estate, and increasing his income through all the days that follow. Rather, it is a sheaf of grain, supplying food and affording strength for an ever-increasing work which he may throw away, or keep for future use. Sunset time is harvest time, and the evening hour is the one in which to fill full the granaries and treasure chests for days unborn. Sunsets should be bound with the golden cords of memory and kept forever.

The pathway of life grows brightest for those who have wasted fewest of their yesterdays. Hours well spent and safely garnered never lose the brightness of their sunshine. It always glows in the sparkle of the eye, in the brightness of a winning smile, in the warm atmosphere of helpfulness with which they are surrounded. Hours spent in sin and dissipation have no luster to cast upon the afterdays, but goodness is always luminous. Hours of right-living may be likened to blazing suns that never cease to glow. The ability to retain their brightness means an ever-increasing splendor of life. It is this that the inspired writer must have had in mind when he wrote that the pathway of the just is as a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

The secret of perfection along any line of endeavor is the gathering in and retaining the good, at the same time sorting out and permanently eliminating that which is bad. It is a work of patience and progression. It requires the fruitage of many days, the garnered glories of many sunsets, to endow one with the riches of genius; and not one single day should be lost. The lapidist, whose magic touch changes pebbles into glittering jewels to adorn the neck of beauty; the sculptor, whose mallet-stroke is so accurate that rough, ill-shapen stones become

forms of grace to inspire the generations; the artist, whose brush quickens the common dust and clay into marvelous paintings of unfading color and undying sentiment; the botanist, whose carefulness transforms barren waysides into gardens, and the desert places into banqueting halls; the metallurgist, whose powerful hand takes the knotted lumps of ore and fashions them into the bronze doors of a great cathedral —all these represent that priceless frugality that will not permit a sunset to escape. Their first crude efforts were sheaves of rich experiences, which they garnered and stored away in the treasure chests of memory. They had the bright light of their first sunsets to add to the morning light of their second endeavors. They continued to store the brightness of the passing experiences. Day by day the light grew brighter, until at last there came the perfect day, when the whole world stood amazed at the perfection of their handiwork. The loss of one sunset would have faded the light and dimmed the glory of their final achievement. All perfect art is but gathered sunsets.

This law holds in the matter of spiritual perfection. God does much for us at conversion, when, through faith in him, we are changed by his grace into new men and new women. It is like a lost planet finding its central sun, and re-

suming its accustomed place, and finding light, and warmth, and life, and joy again. Wonderful indeed is the power of God as manifested in the conversion of any individual, but conversion is not perfection. Perfection is something that the inspired writer urges us "to go unto." "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity."

Do not permit the colors of triumph to fade from your first day's sky. Hold on to that sunset. Each day will furnish its added beam of light. Faith, hope, and love, and all the Christian graces will become more beautiful for you, to you, and in you. The pathway will become brighter and brighter. Life will have fewer shadows because the light falls upon you from so many angles and becomes more perfectly diffused. To-morrow can have no hindering uncertainties, for the light of the past experiences illumines the future. There is light for every darkened corner, and one may rejoice that all things are working together for good, because we do love God. Gathered sunsets make life's trail ablaze with light.

Let no to-day become yesterday, except in the

calendar, as we reckon time. Each day must become part of us as we live in an ever-present now. The same alphabet we learned in childhood is ours to-day. Because we did not forget it with the setting of the sun, it served us to-day as we spell out, in polysyllables, a newly discovered truth. The alphabet did not fade with the death of the day we learned it, so that it is now part of our lives. As we cannot think apart from the words we learned long ago; and as we cannot calculate, save as we use the first-learned characters from one to ten; so, in the developing of the soul, we must not lose one single hour of prayer or inspiration of a noble purpose.

Both building and growing are alike in this—they are processes of "adding to." Brick added to brick and timber added to timber means a stately building. Cell added to cell means growth of body and increase in stature. But handling brick is not enough, they must be placed with a purpose and kept firmly fixed in the place desired. The brick of yesterday must be where it can have added to it the brick of to-day. Physical growth depends upon the keeping the cells of yesterday for a foundation upon which to build the cells of to-day. Christian living is similar. We build a character and grow a soul but the process is the same, with both character and soul. We gain by adding to.

Therefore we must not permit any of our sunsets to fade away. All that we have gained through prayer and Christian service must be held to brighten each new morn. The spiritual victory over temptation, the answer to our intercessory prayers, the moment of spiritual illumination as we read the Bible, all these are priceless experiences upon which to add the newer conquests of to-day. We must not permit the disease of sin to sap our vitality and destroy the growth of yesterday. We must guard our spiritual health that we may grow. This is what Christ meant when he said: "Men ought always to pray." The culture of the soul is an eternal process. Days must not pass; they must remain as part of our own selves.

III

BEYOND THE CURTAINED CLOUDS

One of the rarest treasures of the May time is the richness and purity of the sky. The winter wraps the heavens in robes of somber hue as though in mourning for the summer dead; but at the coming of the first white cloud, and sound of first lark's song, the sky seems to melt in tenderness, and assume the softest, richest hue of blue. As far as the eye can reach there is nothing but blue—soft, rich, warm, tender, melting, soul-entrancing blue. Blue, as clear as an unshadowed midland lake. Blue as a translucent sapphire without a flaw to disturb its gleaming surface. A great arch of caressing tenderness through which the white-flecked clouds ride in state, as they sail majestically from one port of mystery to another port of mystery. Among the richest treasures of the spring must be mentioned the deepening of the blue and the hanging of the snow-white curtains of the clouds.

But life's horizon is ever draped with rich folds of white and blue, that hang like silken curtains, to hide, with tantalizing secrecy, the

mysteries that lie beyond. Day by day the curtains hide their treasure-chests of mystery, tempting us to strike tents and journey toward them. With the eagerness with which little children watch the unwrapping of a Christmas package we watch the moving of these clouds, trusting that each new shifting of the curtains will make the coveted revelation, but as we journey on they still evade us.

Conservative people, ones who never startle themselves or their friends by doing anything new, not that they are averse to doing anything new but simply because they are not mentally capable of entertaining new ideas, say that the mysteries that lie behind the curtained clouds are childish fancies and youth's illusions; and that energy expended in reaching the buried treasure at the rainbow's end were as fruitful an enterprise. Those of us who have endeavored to solve these mysteries know better, for we have found that the curtained clouds that hide, are the ones that, like banners, guide us to the things we really need.

Man must not be unmindful of the ministry of mystery. Over against everything enigmatic God has given man an insatiable desire to find out the hidden meaning. Yielding to that divinely implanted impulse develops powers that otherwise would atrophy. Behold the

benefits of these endeavors as they lifted the human race out of stagnation and taught it the way of progress. Tented in the low swamp-lands, eating roots and bark, man saw these curtains that suggested to his hunger-pinched body the thought of a banqueting-hall where he might feed. His quest never brought him to the ladened tables of his desire, but as he journeyed he found grain and fruits and nuts and berries, substantial food for a full twelve-month. Dwelling amid the sick and dying, man saw the moving of the curtains that God hangs along our sky-line, and felt that, somewhere, beyond their folds, must exist a spring, whose living waters would not only heal the sick but give the drinker perpetual youth. The spring was never found, but as man journeyed westward in the quest he found a land whose liberties and institutions crowd a century of blessings into every decade. Toiling with small recompense, like some dull beast of burden, man saw the clouds that suggested a palace of ease and luxury. He failed to find the palace of his dreams, but on the way he discovered labor-saving machinery that has made his labor a delight, and given to every laborer a home surpassing in comforts the baron's stately castle.

Because of the ministry of mystery he has been able to discover the depth and values of his

own soul. In his effort to reach the curtained clouds man has had to rally his forces, and, to meet arising exigencies, he has been compelled to draw upon the resources of his nature, until he startled himself with his newly discovered possibilities and powers. He trained his body to wrestle against physical odds; he trained his mind to master the handicaps of ignorance; he found the glittering sword of courage with which to destroy defeating fear; he learned the value of faith and hope with which to enrich the soul when disaster would impoverish. Without the effort aroused by the cloudy curtains of mystery, he could not have found himself, and perfected his work of invention, art and letters.

The cloud curtains are also the temple curtains beyond which men are ever seeking God. As the pillared cloud led Israel victoriously through troubled waters and desert sands, so the mysteries of life and death, and the natural world in which we live, have led the human mind to religious contemplation. Man found himself entangled in the maze of sin, helplessly confused amid the ways that wound about, and crossed, and led to still more hopeless entanglements. Despair pointed to the narrow, tangled ways and said, "There is nothing better." Looking upward, the distant clouds spoke of a larger world and greater freedom, and beckoned man

to try again. By faith he was saved. To a thoughtful, reverent man, all nature reveals and conceals the One who brought it into existence. An awakened soul will never be satisfied until he finds God. He longs to see the Hand that parts the curtains and hurls the lightnings. He yearns to see the Face whose smile fills the sky with sunlight, and transfigures the cloudy curtains, until they become the portals of the heavenly temple. While mystery is not the mother of religion, it is, and ever has been, an important part of the Christian faith. "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing," says King Solomon. He might have added, "It is the glory of man to search until he find it."

It was from behind the curtained clouds that God spoke, introducing Jesus as the world's Redeemer, saying, "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him." It was an overhanging canopy of cloud that curtained the disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration, and it was in this curtained tabernacle that they beheld the glory of their Lord. To hide the shame of those who crucified His Son, God hung a curtain of cloud about the sun, enveloping Calvary in the shades of night. It was a curtain of cloud that hid the ascending Lord from the sight of the wondering, astonished, fear-filled disciples. It was from amid their soft drapery that the angels spoke of his

coming again, and it is upon the clouds that the Son of man shall come in his glory to judge the nations. From the glory of the Patmos vision, John exclaimed, "Behold he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him!" To the very end Christ is surrounded with the curtained clouds of mystery. "And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud One sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped."

Mystery has a large part in the Christian faith, not to discourage, but to encourage the prayerful, aspiring souls of men. The drapery of cloud hangs all about, not to defeat, but to challenge. It is no illusion like a great desert distance filled with the blue of emptiness, that strews the sands with the bones of those whom it deceives, but is as real as the curtains of the ancient tabernacle that held the symbol of Jehovah's presence. Life's mysteries are often most tantalizing; its problems artfully made difficult of solution; but always within their depths is God.

To-day, for our development, it is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but it is the promise that some day we shall see, not through the mists darkly, but face to face with God. Some day we

shall pass beyond the cloudy portals, and the vision of God and our own immortality shall lie before our enraptured vision. The puzzle of life shall there find perfect solution. The equation in which life is now the unknown quantity shall find its answer. In that cloudless land we shall know even as we are known. The shadows of death are the last shadow the soul of the righteous shall ever see. Until that glad day comes, let us fit ourselves, through prayer and goodness, to receive such revelations of the mystery of godliness as God may care to reveal as he parts the curtains of our life's horizon, knowing that we journey to a perfect, unclouded day.

IV

TILLING THE SKY

MAN, that must till the soil for the building of his body, must also till the sky for the growing of his soul. This was the thought of a little woman among the Ozarks, who had given a long and beautiful life in training her people of the hills. It was Commencement Day in the college she had founded. Gathered about her were the young men and young women from the humble homes of those rugged hills. They were now leaving her sheltering care to "commence" life. She was such a tiny bit of woman, but through the lens of tears in those students' eyes, she was greater and more stately than any queen. Her eyes gleamed with a love-lighted moisture, her lips trembled with great emotions as she rose to offer her last words of counsel. She knew that very soon they would be beyond the reach of her voice, and her desire was to write just one more message upon the pages of their memories, a message that should never be erased. Breathlessly we awaited her words, which were these: "My children, whatever you do, or wherever you go, this one task I place before you. Con-

tinue your study of astronomy, for there is nothing that so uplifts and widens one's life as a study of the sky."

These were not the words of a mere dreamer, but of a very practical woman, and were words of wisdom uttered to young men and young women who were practical students, yearning to make their lives count. These students were trained observers who would travel that they might see things as they are; they were scholars who would study in order to make discoveries. They were to enter the strain and struggle of competition. They were to match their brawn and brain against honest rivalry and unscrupulous dishonesty. They were not entering paradise, yet, amid it all, the one who yearned most for their unmeasured success and honor, urged them to cast their plowshare deep into the wide expanse of overarching blue, whose owner is God, but whose harvests belong to the reaper.

The little woman was very practical, for a man must not permit the narrowing influences of earthly endeavor to cramp and destroy the soul. This is the tendency of most of our daily duties, even those of the most fascinating and absorbing scientific character. A man may follow the footsteps of Luther Burbank and devote his life to the study of plants, and through his magic touch, may bring beauty of form and richness of flavor

to bud and blossom, vegetable and fruit, and yet the very fascination of the work may bind him into a narrow world of just buds and blossoms, vegetables and fruits. He may, like Edison or Steinmetz, choose the fairyland of electricity; or, like Madame Curé, enter the enchanted realm of radio-activity; or, like Morse and Bell and Davenport, become wizards in the world of invention, and find a joy that is as perilous as it is unutterable. Any realm of nature or invention, absorbs and fascinates as clover blossoms claim the bee. He who studies will find that a lifetime is too short to fathom the unmeasured depths of an atom or explore the mysteries of one drop of dew.

But the very fascination of these things is their peril, for the tendency of any line of endeavor is to narrow and to restrict one's life. One need not yield to this tendency, but the chances are that he will. Darwin reports spending several delightful years studying fish-worms, but while engaged in this absorbing task he lost all taste for music. Ericsson had a similar experience. Planning, with steel armor, to remake the navies of the world, he refused his soul all sound of blended tones, endeavoring to feed his whole nature on armor plate. It was not until Ole Bull, against Ericsson's desire, entered his factory, and began playing his violin, that the

great inventor became a weeping, willing captive, kneeling at the shrine of music, tearfully confessing that he had then found that which he had lost, and for which his soul had been craving. When a man, through the microscope, begins a life study of the infinitesimal, he is apt to get his own ego into the field of vision and magnify himself. On the other hand, considering only his own achievements in art or architecture, one is apt to exaggerate his own importance saying, "Is not this great Babylon, which I have builded?" However, when he begins to study the stars and comprehend something of the vastness of the plan upon which God has made the heaven and the earth, he will see his own littleness and exclaim with the psalmist, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man?"

No earth-made ceiling is high enough for a growing brain. Each individual must have a God-made sky in which to lift his head and think the thoughts of the Almighty. The earthly thing upon which we set our affection and which we think so essential may mean the wreck and ruin of the soul. It is easy to neglect the brain, and direct all one's energies toward gaining earthly possessions, not for the opportunities afforded for benevolence, but that one may dress in style

and enjoy a social life, not knowing that it is far better to be a great thinker than to be the best dressed man in Paris. Poverty may be infinitely better than wealth when the individual has a familiar sky above his head and a good book in his hand. How insignificant are earth's greatest obstacles compared with the immensities of stellar space! Nothing can hinder the man who is accustomed to measure the distances between stars. With his eyes on the distant suns, poverty becomes a mole-hill; poor health, but a breath of mist; and success is within easy reach. It is good for one to till the sky until he learns the vastness of his Creator's thoughts.

One of the richest harvests garnered from the sky is a revelation of the accuracy with which God works. The stars do not dwell in a land of "Hit and Miss," and eclipses are not accidental happenings. No ship cuts the waves of the sea with half the accuracy as star and planet move in their appointed courses. There are no swervings nor deviations from the plan of God, so that an astronomer can calculate the exact second when a comet will return from its long journey through unseen realms; as well as foretell the conjunction of planets a thousand years from now. God has appointed an exact second for the rising of the sun, and another exact second for its setting, and man knows what both of them

are a thousand years before the day arrives. Then let us till the sky until we learn that He who planned the high-arched blue, and marked orbits for stars and planets, is also the Designer of our own lives, and has set for us a divine purpose somewhat like the vastness of the sky. Yielding ourselves to God as the heavenly constellations yield themselves to their controlling powers, each one has a greater life to live, and a more sublime destiny to attain, than his fondest dreams. How foolish it is to till the soil for money, and miss the very essence of life, by failing to utilize the sky that yields such tender ministries with so little effort!

It is well to look upward and learn a lesson of patience, for the open sky teaches that the plans of God are not worked out in a day. The journey from star-dust to harvest-ladened planet peopled by a happy family of contented men, requires many millions of years, yet, from the beginning it was in the mind of God. He has never altered his plan, but with divine accuracy the work has passed from stage to stage of development with perfect progression. With such an example, we must learn patience and not become discouraged when we cannot see the end from the beginning. A child can make a shelf full of mud pies in one summer's afternoon, and they will last no longer than the first rain.

Hasty work means wasted effort. Life that endures must be planned of God, fulfilled with astronomical accuracy, and most patiently developed.

How wonderful the brain that is molded after something of the vastness of the open sky, and how thrilling to walk and till the fields of heavenly blue! We were meant for those heights. It does not require a very great elevation in the pure atmosphere of a Western State to push back the horizon forty and fifty miles. This planet is not the objective of life. It is only the hilltop where God has placed us for a little while that we may catch a vision as wide as the universe and as high as his own White Throne.

V

UNQUARRIED STATUES

Michael Angelo, with his statues of David and Moses, proved that Phidias and Praxiteles had not exhausted the marvelous possibilities of the art of sculpture. Rodin, with his "Thinker," has shown, while Phidias and Praxiteles demonstrated the possibility of giving immortality to the unsurpassed beauty of Grecian form, and while Michael Angelo revealed the power of expressing grace, as in David, and commanding leadership, as in Moses, that the achievements of these two schools of art were the Pillars of Hercules, not marking the limit of art, but the open gateway to uncharted seas and undiscovered realms in the art of reshaping marble. There is not a lofty sentiment of the soul, a struggling aspiration toward goodness, or form of idealism that cannot be made to live in marble, and exert undying influence. There is more than "an angel in the block of marble." There are all the hopes and fears, joys and sorrows, laughter and tears, longings and aspirations, desires and despairs; there is all that is manly, noble, and heroic, lying in any block of

marble awaiting the coming of the liberating chisel. What inspiration to the young artist of to-day, and what joy to all lovers of the beautiful! The depths of earth are stored with a wealth of unquarried statues.

The progress of civilization is ofttimes hindered because youth, in thinking of statues, consider the pedestals upon which they rest rather than the depth from which they were quarried. They very often do not care to begin life at the right place. Because they covet praise, and enjoy the warm, congenial atmosphere of appreciation, they shun the depths, hours of loneliness, the unrequited toil of preparation, and the laborious efforts of beginning. Modeling clay is an important part of the achievement; but getting the proper marble is one of the first essentials.

The experience of Michael Angelo is common to all men of real achievement: he found that the market place does not offer marble blocks of sufficient size for him to work out his divine conception. Hucksters and makers of money in the market place seldom understand ambitious youth that asks for larger blocks than they are capable of handling. Their idea of a great thought is an ornament for the mantelpiece. But men of achievement will not be daunted. Locking his studio, Angelo went to superintend the

breaking of blocks in the mountain of Carrara, and when the sluggish-minded people of the mountains refused to do his bidding, he opened new quarries in Seravez. Before he could carve his statue he knew that he must quarry a block of marble sufficiently large. He knew also that the block of marble could be had for the digging. He found what he needed but did not exhaust the treasury. The world still has the material, richer than that which made Angelo and Rodin famous, awaiting the youth of ambition to undertake great things, and the willingness, at any cost, to superintend the breaking of the marble blocks from the buried storehouses.

The pleasure of nature is to store her raw material in seemingly inaccessible strongholds. She does not willingly yield them to men lacking vision and great conceptions. If they were of easy access, common men would crush them to make roads for donkeys to tramp over. Nature's treasures are too valuable for ignorance to destroy, so she locks them in secret depths or inaccessible heights, awaiting the coming of the man of genius. If only a man yields himself to the divine leadings, and catches a vision of a statue like Moses, or a façade for the Church of San Lorenzo, or for a mausoleum for the Medici, no mountainside is too steep to chisel a roadway through the jagged rocks, no morass

so yielding but that a solid highway may be erected, no water so troubled but that boats may safely transport the precious marble. He will not depend upon hirelings nor lean upon borrowed strength. The dream of beauty must be wrought in marble, the unquarried statue must be lifted from obscurity and made to live in some public place, therefore he will personally attend to the breaking of the blocks.

It is not an easy matter to live out a divine idea and make it a thing tangible and real for a critical world to examine and criticize and afterwards love and venerate. Sluggards and lovers of ease cannot do it. To them an unquarried statue is only a stone. For centuries no one has given it any attention; why should they? They would rather have something to eat and drink. A cushioned chair is far more comfortable to sit on, and a potato is much more substantial food. What they want is something to eat, and a place in which to lounge, and because they do not see the value of great ideas they can never be forgotten when dead, for they were never known while living.

He lives who forgets to live and concentrates all his powers in bringing to light the vision of his beauty-loving soul. It may be the beauty of art or the beauty of worthy living; it may be the beauty of perfect workmanship in shop or

factory, or the beauty of a wholesome influence flowing from noble character; it may be loveliness of sympathetic serving, or the beauty of aggressive battle for righteousness; it may take any one of many forms of exalted thinking and endeavor, yet its realization comes only when one eats, and drinks, and bends every energy, not for the sake of living, but for the realization of that which is more than living.

How lamentable for a human life to end and find at the final judgment that all its days were of less value to the world than that of a coral polyp! How wonderful for one to be made out of dust, and after a while to crumble back into dust, and yet, refusing to grovel in the dust, leave the world richer, and better, and more beautiful, so that people of another age will breathe his name in reverence as they behold that which he hath wrought. Professor Finsen, the inventor of the "light cure," was an invalid for many years, yet he labored like a slave, in the severest self-denial, to bring his invention, without compensation, to the service of the world's sick and suffering. He had but one dread and that was the regret of dying, and leaving his little five-year-old boy without any memory of his father. He desired to live long enough to impress his face and life upon the memory of his son, that, in the after years, the growing

man would never forget the one who toiled so earnestly for him. He did not want to be forgotten. How little did he dream of the immortality that was his! He found an unquarried statue in the sunbeam where others had overlooked it. Through ceaseless toil he brought it within the vision of the world and gained a name that countless ages will not forget.

How wonderful to be the son of such a man! And though the image of the father's face be blotted from the memory, the statue that he carved will help and heal the generations. How wonderful to be the son of such a man, but how much more wonderful it is to be the man himself! To fight with optimistic heart against the ravages of disease, to overcome the natural yearnings of a father's heart, to endure the most slavish toil without thought or hope of compensation, to be a sick man fighting for others who were sick; a dying man making battle against disease that others may not taste of death!

This is the joy unspeakable, to know that life is not in vain, but everlastingly worth while. The visions shall not fade as summer clouds at twilight time, but shall live in that which is as imperishable as marble. Each one can say with deep resolve: "Men shall behold the beauty of my soul by beholding the beauty of my daily

life. Since words are blossoms, I shall, with gracious speech, show my friends how choice a garden I have planted in my heart. Since every blossom bears a seed I shall take pleasure in planting them within the hearts of others, that the beauty of my life may live in them. Out of the marble block that it has been mine to break from its hiding place, I shall carve the image I have treasured so long within my heart." To do this is to find a joy unspeakable. Life is not useless, but gloriously worth while. Eating, and drinking, and toiling for that which is far more than life, one can never die.

VI

THE AGES TO COME

No matter how earnestly we may love our life-calling, and rejoice in our chosen field of activity, there are hours when the easiest task becomes irksome and its daily repetition seems unbearable. However healthy the soul and robust the moral nature, a constant onslaught of sorrow may wound like a poisoned dart, filling the soul with painful forebodings. Beholding the transitoriness of life, and the apparent frailty and uncertainty of those things upon which we place our heaviest dependence, we become depressed, and feel that nothing is permanent and that life's products are but empty shadows. These are common experiences, and their frequent repetition does not lessen their depressive power. Coming upon us to-day they are just as hurtful as when they challenged us for the first time.

That we may overcome these disagreeable tendencies, and live a life victorious, Paul revealed the secret of his own achievements. To him work never became drudgery, sorrow never festered or left a feverish wound, while even the

most commonplace incident was of the deepest significance because he had learned to acquire and maintain a deep perspective that placed each moment of time in the white light of eternity. He believed that we are not created for the hour but for the centuries, and that we must work not so much for the present hour as for the years that are yet to be. The one purpose of every word and deed, to Paul, was to "show the ages to come the exceeding riches of God's grace."

As the prolific and luxuriant vegetation of the carboniferous age bordered the lakes with ferns, the rivers with reeds, and the hillsides and valleys with gigantic trees of grotesque form, that, in the ages to come, man might have the exhaustless coalbeds to protect him from the cold; as the coral polyps, buried beneath the waves, love and labor and die, generation after generation, until a coral island lifts its head to receive the kisses of the passing waves and extend the arms of a protecting harbor, that, in the ages to come, the storm-tossed mariners may find safe shelter against the stormy wind and wave; so you and I are to love, and labor, and die, not for ourselves, but that the ages to come, through our goodness and fidelity, may behold the riches of God's grace.

This does not mean that we are to so bury the present in the future that our lives shall

consist of nothing save vague dreams and idle contemplations. It means the opposite. We are to magnify the present and give it increasing value by crowding it with an eternal significance. We are not to drop to-day into the silent ocean of the future and see it fade from sight, but into to-day we are to crowd to-morrow and all the other to-morrows that shall follow. Instead of losing the drop of water in Niagara we are to crowd all the dash and splendor and power of Niagara into the single drop of water; instead of losing the dew in the ocean, we crowd the ocean into the dewdrop; instead of burying the present into the future, we gather all eternity and crowd it into a single lifetime, so that every second of time becomes as precious as a thousand years of eternity, and the smallest task we have to perform becomes as sacred as the songs of the angels.

When one possesses this conception of life that crowds a vast eternity within the compass of a single individual life, no toil can ever become drudgery. Every deed has divine significance. The most ordinary task will be performed carefully, knowing that it must stand the scrutiny and criticisms of the passing centuries. We labor then with the various elements of life, as the artists of Venice toil with their priceless mosaics, willing to spend a lifetime of pains-

taking endeavor in forming a single feature of a saint, knowing that long after they themselves have ceased to toil the wisdom of untold centuries shall review their efforts to either praise or blame. Hitherto we have despised the commonplace things that fell to our hands, while we busied ourselves searching for some great thing worthy of our effort, with the result that nothing has been accomplished; now we find, that that only is truly great which is commonplace. Divine opportunities are everywhere. In the low-browed man upon the street we see the possibility of an ennobled and redeemed humanity. In the waif, crying from hunger, we see the center of world-wide and eternal destinies. Words are winged messengers, so we learn to study them with care, and speak them with the precision with which a musician strikes his chords. Divine destinies are depending upon the perfection with which we toil, adding a charm to every endeavor that never fades with weariness. There can be no drudgery to him who has a perspective eternity long.

This conception of life which Paul gives us will carry us unharmed through all the misfortunes of life. It is impossible for us to escape sorrow. By rigid economy we may save our money only to have it stolen by a deceitful friend; we may build a home, only to find it

purchased and occupied by another; loved ones, more precious than our own lives, have been lured from our side by the hand of death. These hours are naturally dark and of tortuous length, and if it were not for the fact that we have learned to think in terms of eternity, we would die of a broken heart. But we do not die; we pass through them with triumphant tread. The soul sobs but does not bleed; the heart hurts but does not break. We are not living for this world alone; our horizon has been widened because we have been lifted to a higher level; we can now see two worlds; our faith sweeps onward as far as God can think. The earthly home for which we planned and toiled has passed into the hands of another, but we rejoice in the knowledge that we have a home, not made with toiling, blistered hands of earth, but one eternal in the heavens. Our loved ones no longer greet us at the table or occupy their accustomed places in the family circle, but we have not lost them forever. They have simply passed from time into eternity, and because we also are the children of eternity, they are still our own, and we shall see them once again. Thank God for the transforming power that comes into every human life when, by divine aid, one crowds eternal significance into his days, and works, not for himself, but for "the ages to come."

Paul's view of life enables us to find perfect satisfaction in working with the frailties of time in building that which is immortal in character and service. Possessed with such a purpose, the spider's web becomes a cable, dust becomes slabs of marble, and seconds becomes decades. There is nothing more fragile than a word, spoken in stammering weakness, but with a trembling desire to be of service, yet out of one word fitly spoken may be created an influence that sweeps heaven and earth. A faltering word of Christian testimony was spoken by a godly man made weak by an unconquerable embarrassment, but his utterance proved mighty. Lodging in the heart of Charles Spurgeon, it started him on his wonderful career that is yet shaking all Christendom. The smile of the face is far more delicate than the frailest blossom that opens its soft petals in obedience to the caressing influence of the sun, for its existence is but for the fraction of a second; yet one kindly, love-illumined look has been the force that has lifted multitudes of mortals out of despondency and uselessness, and made them the creators of mighty moral and religious forces. It was a smile that saved John G. Wooley for the cause of temperance. A smile, and a word, and the gift of a handkerchief were all that Frances E. Willard used to redeem one of the most notori-

ous characters of Chicago, and make her one of God's ministers of light among the fallen.

When one learns to live with the light of eternity flooding his pathway there is not an event in life so small and insignificant that he cannot employ it to create, and afterward use it, to sustain eternal influences. There is joy now in living for Christ, but let us live, not for that joy alone, but that, in the ages to come, we may show the exceeding riches of God's grace. Let them, through us, behold what the grace of God can do to save, to keep, to empower, and to make immortal such sin-smitten ones as we have been. This is the secret for making toil pleasant, sorrows helpless, and the humblest effort an enterprise of such character as crowds earth with richer meaning, and fills the heavens with new-found joys. Show them that the greatest of all known forces is a Christ-filled life.

VII

THE UNLOCKED DOOR OF TRUTH

History has proven that the power of the "All Highest" War Lord is as weak as a baby's arm compared with the power of the humblest individual who has entered into and taken possession of some great truth. A thousand lords and ladies were gathered within the Babylonian palace which was ablaze with light and filled with music. All hail to King Belshazzar! His praises were upon every lip. All honor to the royal family that had lifted the hanging gardens above the low-lying plains, who had swung gates of bronze and planned the mightiest city in the world. Every lip praised and every heart feared the power of the daring king. But when the finger of God wrote a message of fire upon the palace walls it was no longer Belshazzar who was ruler. The fate of king and lord and ladies was in the hand of Daniel. He alone of that great throng had seen and entered into the truth of temperance and self-control. Such was the sustaining power of that possessed truth that when the man-made king trembled, and a nation crumbled into oblivion, he alone stood

unmoved and triumphant amid the wreck and chaos.

Before the throne of ecclesiastical autocracy the rulers of the nations bowed in weakness and everlasting shame. The autocracy of superstition is the most merciless and deadly known, but when the power of Rome was at the zenith of her unscrupulous reign, Martin Luther, a common man with uncommon sense, discovered and entered into the great truth that "the just shall live by faith." Entering into that truth, he found a power before which the claims of the Pope became insignificant, and by his boldness, brought religious liberty to the people, thus gaining universal love and immortality.

Mary was Queen of England, and with that overzeal of religious bigotry, was ruling with unquestioned power and severity. Hugh Latimer was only a humble preacher, one of the least of the queen's subjects, living among the poor, but beside him, Queen Mary sinks into everlasting contempt. The robes of fire wrapped his body in their golden folds, hiding him forever from the sight of man, but the world has not forgotten him. His dust knows no burial place, but because he lived in the sheltering tabernacle of a great truth he will live forever in the hearts of those who love religious tolerance, while the dust of Mary crumbles in the gruesome vault at

Westminster Abbey, with no lip to sing her praises to the passing generations. Royal or ecclesiastical power is nothing compared with the enduring authority of a common man who has found, and entered into, and wholly and completely lives a great eternal truth of God.

Truth incarnate in human life is almighty, but truth in the abstract is as helpless as is the dust of the Egyptian highways, which witnessed the world's mightiest pageants, but which are unable to tell the story of mighty armies, royal cavalcades, and kingly processions that once tramped upon them. Truth has always existed. However conceited a religious leader may be, no one ever dared to presume himself the creator of a truth. Long before the world had settled upon its foundations, and the constellations of stars, like chandeliers, swayed and swung their pendants of light, all truth beat and throbbed within the heart of the Almighty. Throughout the beauty of verdant slope, crested wave, and starlit sky, these words of encouragement have ever rung: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." The truths of civilization have been in existence since creation, yet in every century heathenism has flourished. The truth about human freedom has always been, yet Rameses sat upon a throne and drove the Hebrews to their task, beating their backs

with knotted thongs and murdering their children; the barons lived in palatial palaces fed in luxury, while serfs toiled for harvests which they could never gather, and starving, dared not plead for a morsel of the food their toil provided; the Sultan of Turkey reveled in orgies, flagrant and disgusting, while humble Armenians were torn asunder, their bleeding bodies fed to swine, their wives and children tortured beyond belief, while no civilized nation dared lift its hand in protest. Truth, in itself, is not omnipotent. To be of value, truth must be entered into and possessed.

Every truth has a door. To ignorance the door is barred and bolted. To thoughtlessness, the door remains unseen. Only to the eye trained with prayer, faith in God, and love for man, is given the vision of these bright portals, and the possession of the key by which he can unlock the door and enter into and enjoy the truth, which the world has long known by heart, but which had never enveloped, sheltered, and controlled their lives. If he has the courage to use the key and open the door and enter in, he shall not only feel the saving power of God, but he shall leave an open way through which all men may pass to greater power. If he refuses to unlock the door, and, like the learned ones of whom Christ spoke, carries away the key, enter-

ing not in themselves and hindering those who would enter, he becomes an exile, without home through time and eternity.

That we may more clearly comprehend this truth let us consider a chapter of American history. Hayne had finished his classic and convincing speech. With gracious charm he had proclaimed the doctrine of union without liberty, a nation of free people, half slave. The rapt attention and tribute of silent applause from the audience told how critical the situation had become. Opposed to him was Daniel Webster, America's favorite child of genius, whose face was as classic as a Greek god's, and whose commanding bearing won battles like a general. He was a scholar of the strong New England type, searching for the key to unlock the truth that the nation needed, and make it of easy access to the people. He saw that there could be no union without universal freedom. Hour after hour he proclaimed the truth, making the mightiest speech the nation had ever heard, swaying his audience back to the realm of clear thinking. Finally, with one sentence, "Union and liberty, now and forever, one and inseparable," he revealed to an awakened nation that he had found the key that would unlock the door of truth that the hour needed. But in his hour of triumph, dazzled by the possibility of

becoming President, he refused to use the key. To gain the solid South he uttered his fateful speech for compromise. The North held its breath in expectancy while New England sobbed like one bereft of his favorite child. He who had the key refused to enter in himself and hindered those who would have entered.

But New England had another son of genius who, on the eventful night that Webster, with trembling fingers, tried, and failed, to pick up the key that he had thrown away, left Faneuil Hall with blazing, burning thoughts. He too had found the way, but was unknown and untried. Again he was in Faneuil Hall sitting beside James Russell Lowell, listening to the mad mouthings of men, who, for the money involved, were endeavoring to rechristen Wrong and call it Right. He had waited weary weeks, but now he was unable to keep back his flaming indignation. Rising, he began to speak. On the very platform where Webster had fallen he began to plead the right of human liberty. New England was thrilled with hope. Here at last was a man who not only saw the truth but was determined to enter into it. With the confidence of a prophet he used the key, unlocked the door and showed a nation the way it ought to go.

Truth must become incarnate in man and man must be incarnate in truth. Every Christian

man will testify to this. In childhood you committed scripture which had little meaning to your childish mind. It was not until in the after years when sorrow came, and grief blinded the eye, and pain wounded the heart, that the clear, sweet voice of memory began to repeat these verses, and what had been meaningless in childhood became great, wholesome, sheltering, protecting truths, in which you found all the consolations of God.

It is a wonderful hour when the soul enters into and takes possession of God's great truth, becomes the master of all its stored up power, and begins to use it in the service of love. It is a wonderful experience and need never be delayed, for the door is easy to find. Years ago earth was blessed by the coming of One who worked hard at the carpenter trade, and in the school of toil and prayer, found the way that scholars had overlooked. Standing before kings and earthly potentates he said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life." His spirit is the way for men to live, the door through which they pass into all truth, the life of fullest spiritual development. Christ is the open way to every truth. Through him men attain the proper point of view, and, learning to obey the Father as did he, begin to live the life triumphant.

VIII

WEAVING SUNBEAMS

NATURE is always busy weaving sunbeams, and not one of them, like a knotted thread, is cast from her loom. The waves cast their crystal spray upon the sands to waste away, but not so with the sun as he lavishly casts his beams broadcast o'er the earth. Not one of them goes upon a fruitless errand, and not one of them fails to reach its intended goal. It is not that the sun is wise in directing its energy, but because the earth is ready to utilize, with untiring fidelity, the gift of sunlight.

How abundantly the sunbeams come! The arched sky is an upturned basket, out of which God is pouring his wealth of sunlight upon a thirsty, needy planet. These rays of light fall everywhere, because they are needed everywhere. Upon arctic snow and desert sand and undiscovered ocean waves they fall as readily as upon the forests of Brittany or the vineyards of France. They place their gleaming coronets upon the crystal brows of the Alps. They dance and flash their jewels, as they hold carnival in

the Northern Lights. Even after the sun is set they peer at us through the parted clouds and leap at us from their hiding places in the moon. They fall in the most inaccessible places, yet none of them are ever wasted. As the parched earth drinks raindrops, so the old world absorbs sunbeams. Swifter and more powerful than the leaping waters of a cataract are they poured upon the earth—a Niagara, world-wide and sun-high, with never-ceasing floods of light that bathe each portion of the globe. They are not piled in heaps; they do not swish and whirl, cutting a gorge through solid rock, or form a whirlpool to menace humanity, but the earth absorbs them all, however rapidly they come, and places them in her mysterious loom. Here, in the depths, beyond our sight, the sunbeams are woven into invisible cords that hold the needles of all the compasses to the north that no traveler need be lost in the forest, and no ship perish in the sea. Here, in the depths, the sunbeams are woven into mighty cables of electric power that man picks up with the fingers of the dynamo and compels to lift his burdens, pull his trains, propel his ships, and serve him in a thousand ways. Here, in the depths, is woven that mysterious power that carries the wireless message through the rocks of the mountains and the channels of the sea, and wraps the earth in

a diaphanous garb that makes the wireless telephone a possibility.

The world we see is but woven sunbeams. The forests of oak are the sunbeams of yesterday, wrought into gnarled and knotted fingers to grasp the sunbeams of to-day and wind them on a myriad unseen shuttles. Soon they shall appear woven in the texture of notched leaf and carved chalice of the acorn's cup. The sunbeams falling upon the tangled branches of the hillside vineyard, are woven into buds, and leaves, and clinging tendrils, and afterward into the rich cluster of luscious grapes. The sunbeams fall upon the buried seed and are woven into an emerald lever with which the clod is lifted, into sturdy leaves that are chemical laboratories where crude sap is changed into milk, into heads of golden wheat with which to feed a thoughtless, hungry world. Sunbeams are woven into corn and oats, into apples and peaches, into nuts and berries. Falling along the railroad grade, they are woven into violets; falling in the swamps, they are woven into buttercups; falling in the thicket, they are woven into the silken folds of the wild-rose petal.

As nature weaves the sunbeam and not the shadow so man ought to develop his power of utilizing happiness and joy. The sunshine of life ought not to be thrown away like confetti and

ribbon papers on a gala day. Thoughtlessly our youths and maidens dance and sing in giddy, senseless manner, throwing away sunbeams as though their lives were only bits of colored glass through which the light of joy and happiness should pass. Having no looms with which to weave their sunbeams into that which would adorn their souls with garments of ever-growing life, they soon become old and haggard, lifeless and dead, a burned-out planet like the moon, unable to appreciate the sunlight that never fails to fall. Much of the difference between men is due to the ability of one and the inability of the other to make the passing joys of life become a permanent, abiding element of his life.

There is no life without sufficient sunlight to weave a gracious personality. Wholesomeness of character is not the result of partiality on God's part, neither is hideous irritability of disposition occasioned by God's neglect of one of his children. The difference between wholesomeness and unwholesomeness of character is that of the right and wrong use of the blessings which God bestows upon all alike. He who casts his sunbeams away will find old age desert and lifeless, while he who weaves them all into a pleasing personality, will always experience the joy of a more abundant life. A smile is softer than a silken fiber and wears far longer. Its

colors never fade, nor pass out of style. Woven into a robe of genuine cheerfulness the soul possesses rich adornment. These are the individuals whom children love, men seek to honor, and all the world respects. A king's robe is commonplace compared with the attractive vesture of a healthy, cheerful disposition which anyone may weave out of sunbeams, with which God crowds even the most secluded, humble lives.

This occupation is also the secret of sound and vigorous influence. All men possess the power of influence, but even when one has the best intentions he may wield a harmful, baleful influence because of an irritable and complaining disposition. A petulant temper and irascible disposition are the thunder that curds much of the milk of human kindness, and an application of alum will not tend to sweeten the curd. With a sharp tongue one may be driven to hard labor, but the wounds he carries in his heart will prevent him from performing a perfect task. Scolding and fault-finding have driven multitudes into iniquity. It is difficult to drive bees, but one can lure them any distance with a field of blooming clover. By forgetting to weave sunbeams into wholesome character one not only loses the joy of being cheerful but fails in one of the supreme objectives of life—that of wielding intelligently a helpful, healthy, and enduring influence.

The secret of achievement may also be described as weaving sunbeams. In a victorious life the blessings of God take permanent place in the work of hand and brain. Such a life is a loom which receives only that he may produce, the quality of the production depending upon the care and patience with which he works, indifference producing mediocrity, carefulness leading to perfection. What the world calls genius is simply the mastery of the gracious art of weaving sunbeams into polished sentences, enduring thoughts, embroidered tapestry, living poem, inspiring painting, and graceful statue. The way out of mediocrity is to weave one's personal blessings into world-wide benefits.

Here also is found the way to overcome life's obstacles. A frown never wins a battle. It was a singing army that crossed the sea and helped win the World War. Amid the dangers, hardships, and privations our soldiers gathered sunbeams, and with a cheerfulness never before witnessed upon a field of battle did their full part. Trenches, barbed-wire entanglement, and treacherous pitfall are nothing to one who weaves his sunbeams into song. Thus all difficulties fade away and vanish.

These statements are only another way of saying that one should weave God into every fiber of life. The sun is always emblematic of the

Father, and he who weaves sunbeams will know and love God. This is no idle saying, nor a bit of rhetoric, but a soul-saving truth. It is the sun that banishes the shadows; it is God who enables us to overcome our temptations, pain and sorrow. The more we utilize his revelations the brighter the pathway, until at last we shall stand in his presence and have no more need of the sun, for we have him. "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them into living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe all tears from their eyes." Weaving sunbeams in a world of shadows, we prepare ourselves for the unshadowed land where God is the everlasting Light. There, without sin or suffering, we shall know God.

IX

THE PATHWAY OF A NOBLE PURPOSE

As the sleepless eye thirsts for the dawn, and the troubled child hungers for the sound of its mother's voice, so each growing soul seeks a coveted goal the attaining of which, to him, means success. As boys, to be boys, must dream their dreams of strife and conflict upon a battle's front, and girls, to be girls, must dream their milder dreams of love, so coming maturity demands of each aspiring soul that he linger long upon the visions of strife that lead to success. It is well to seek for great things, for each success that enters the golden portals of our lives brings many chariots filled with golden gifts. Returning to his home, the Roman victor was honored with a triumph in which, on golden plate and velvet spread, the trophies and spoils of conquest were displayed. In this way the ambitious Roman youth learned that success is always attended by a great procession of rich rewards. The one who conquers feels more than the soul-thrill of victory. Like Samson, he finds the unexpected reward of a carcass filled with honey awaiting his hungry lips.

While success is worthy of one's best efforts, and all men hunger for it, very few, indeed, have ever reached that happy goal. They failed because they refused to follow the pathway of a noble purpose. They believed that success was altogether a matter of outward form. Seeing the conqueror riding in triumphant procession, they thought that the applause arose, not because he had conquered, but because he wore a helmet and a shield. Hurrying to an emporium, they too purchased helmets and shields and strutted forth to win a world's applause. Foolish souls! The public eye is keen and penetrating and always apprehends the truth. If the people greet a king with shouts, it is not because they see a gleaming crown, but because they recognize a royal soul beneath the crown. If the multitude cheer a warrior, it is not because he bears a standard, but because, in courageous conflict, he won a battle for the people. Spain greeted the discoverer of America, not because of the grain and fruit he brought, but because he had braved the dangers of a dark unknown, and blazed a pathway through untracked wastes.

History repeats the story of a weird Scythian custom. When the head of a house died his family would adorn his corpse in finest raiment, place it in a chariot, and, amid shouts and

hosannas, draw it to the homes of former friends. Coming to each dwelling place, the corpse would be greeted with pomp and splendor. For the final home-coming the steps would be carpeted with silken shawl and choice embroidery, while lighted chandeliers flashed welcome to the dead and sunken eyes. Within the doorway the crowned corpse was placed at the head of a banqueting table at which his gay companions sat and made merry, eating and drinking in his honor. Thus many days were spent in honoring the dead before the body was laid away in the tomb. To us it was a most gruesome custom, but each Scythian youth struggled to possess a home of his own, that some day he might be carried as a crowned corpse through the city streets, and finally, be seated in honor at his own banqueting board.

This ancient custom was the outgrowth of a mistaken view of life still prevailing in many quarters, for the crowned corpse is seen to-day in many public gatherings. What else is the man who seeks office for the selfish purpose and pleasure of holding office? In youth he saw the governor's chair or Senate seat, and found that every chord of his nature was awakened and longed to reach that goal. He determined that this vision of his soul should be transcribed from the pages of his imagination to the pages of his

nation's history. Two pathways opened. The one of a noble purpose, saying, "Seek office, that you may render needed service to your fellow countrymen." The pathway of selfishness opened its portals saying, "Seek office for the sake of gain." Seeing that trickery and deceit promised the easier way to gain his end, he started with leaps and bounds. He cast lots with dishonesty and dissipation. He became a perjurer, a liar, and a thief. He sold himself to an unworthy cause, at last the coveted crown was his. To-day he sits at the head of the table, not a great ruler, but a crowned corpse. In his struggle for power he lost all that constitutes real living.

What else is the man who seeks wealth for the sole sake of having money? For years he has lived the life of a slave, denying himself beauty, music, books, devotions, and benevolence, until, at last, his name appears in Bradstreet marked "AA," and the world greets him as a king. Who is he? A crowned corpse. When he began his career two pathways opened. The one of a noble purpose saying, "Make money for the sake of doing good." The other way, the way of selfishness, saying, "Make money to satisfy your own desires." He chose the latter way. He has his robe and crown, and is seated amid light and applause, but he is not capable of appreciating

its meaning. Long ago he died to honor, and truth, and love, and generous impulse. He knows not the meaning of life.

Among the crowned corpses should also be mentioned those who follow society for society's sake. Through imitation they have destroyed personality. They have smothered their souls under the weight of their self-adornment. In their wild search for physical pleasure all the radiant, sparkling glory of a cultured spirituality has faded into the pallor of death. They are richly robed, they ride in state, receive the plaudits of their followers, sit at table spread with gold and silver plate, but they are now dead to all the higher things of life and are unable to appreciate the empty honors they receive.

The secret of successful living is to follow the pathway of a noble purpose. At first the path may seem a long and arduous one, but it is the only way that has booths in which to rest the weary feet and crowns for living souls to wear. It is in this pathway that one learns the secret of the Christ life, for as he journeys on the way to nobility a voice is ever whispering in his ears: "Life consists in living unselfishly. Seek power only that you may have strength to serve those who are weak. Gain wealth only that you may be able to multiply your usefulness." The

road of a noble purpose leads to a throne, not one for the dead body, but a throne for the living soul. Here too is applause, not such as the Scythian dead received but such as was accorded the Roman conqueror. What a thrill follows noble endeavor! What a joy to come to old age having fought battles for those who were too weak to fight for themselves, and brought victory where otherwise his people would have suffered defeat and death!

The world honors those who honor it. The ruler who has followed the pathway of a noble purpose is always honored by his people. Before him is spread the banquet of a nation's reverence and homage. The man who, in getting money, has kept his hands clean from dishonesty, made just returns for all labor he required, and has kept his heart tender toward his fellow man, is honored by everyone. Men delight to fill his days with happiness, as honeysuckle loves to fill the air with sweetness. When the world discovers a woman whose desire for society is not to satisfy her vanity, or fill a shallow soul with selfish pleasures, but her desire is to scatter jewels of love and gems of inspiration to make rich and beautiful the lives of the common folk, it crowns her in the temple of its heart and calls her an angel sent of God.

The days of autocratic power are ended, but

the hands of the people are busy building thrones and weaving crowns of gold. So long as there is a love for nobility in the human heart men and women of nobility will be placed in power. Life consisteth not in the abundance of the *things* which a man possesseth but in following the pathway of a noble purpose.

X

SWORDS FOR MORAL BATTLES

The best weapons with which to fight moral battles have already been forged, sharpened, and polished, waiting to be unsheathed for conflict. There are some things that the ingenuity of man cannot improve. Man's genius may perfect the locomotive to give swiftness to his feet; it may magnify his voice until his whispers are heard a thousand miles away; it may perfect machinery giving speed and accuracy to his busy fingers; it may print his speech and multiply his audience a millionfold; it may open new fields of endeavor, thus increasing the circle of his influence; it may do many things to break down barriers, and increase usefulness; but all the genius and skill of man can never devise nor contribute to any life a better or keener weapon with which to fight moral battles than belonged to us the eventful morning we left the old homeplace and mother's presence, to begin, among strangers, our first conquest with the world.

As a royal exile David was facing a grave crisis. The relentless enemy was pressing hard,

and he possessed no means of defense. Leaving his hiding place, he hurried into the presence of Ahimelech and asked for a spear or a sword. As Ahimelech was a priest, and not a warrior, he was about to dismiss the young man empty-handed when, suddenly, he remembered. Wrapped in cloth, hanging behind the high priest's robe, was an old sword, the very one that this young man had one time taken from the stiffening fingers of a dying giant, whom he had slain on the eventful morning of his first great conflict. Slowly and carefully the old man took the gleaming blade from its resting place, unwrapped it with reverent touch, explaining that it was all that he had to offer. David was instantly filled with delight. His eyes gleamed with fire, his heart and soul were thrilled with memories of that bright morning, when, filled with the ardor of youth, he had run down the mountainside to make conquest with the giant. This was that giant's sword! The very one that he had wrenched from the stiffening fingers of the vanquished foe. Reaching forward he grasped it in his strong right hand saying: "There is none like that; give it me." There may have been and probably were better and more beautiful swords in the world; keener steel may have been forged into swords for the generals and kings of other lands, but for David

there was none other quite so efficient as the one with which he had gained his first victory.

There are no newly discovered weapons with which to fight the moral battles of to-day. As David was aroused from the shrinking spirit of a fugitive to become a conquering king, by being given the weapon of his former battle, so each man must make requisition upon the past. Behold the weapons which hang in the sacred temple of our souls awaiting the grasp of a courageous hand.

There is the sword of our childhood dreams. Let memory make you a little child again with brother and sister about the hearthstone on a winter's evening, and let your heart glow with good cheer. Or let the sunshine of summer fall across your way until you are a child once more, running with bare feet through the winding ways of the meadow, chasing moths and butterflies, or wading the stream back of the old schoolhouse, your heart as carefree as the rippling waters. Let the dull monotonous hum and soothing influences of those happy days of wonderment come back to your heart until your eyes half close and you begin redreaming your youthful dreams. Blessed dreams, that cause the muscles of your face to relax, while laughter comes to the lips, and compels you to forget the blistering ways you have trodden since those sun-bright

days. Dream your dreams of tenderness and confidence, for the tendency of the city is to harden the heart and dull the sympathies. Then will you have a worthy weapon with which to make battle. You need your old-time faith in God and confidence in man, your former optimistic view of life that gave brightness to every future fancy; your trustfulness in mother's love and father's counsel; the belief that divine power was working for your success because your heart was pure; let these memories and fond dreams come to you once again. You need them. Without the dreams of life the arm has little strength and the will but little power. Let them come back, bringing smiles for your face, and wreaths for your brow, and heaps of gold for your coffers. Youthful dreams must never fade from the gallery of memory if men would achieve. Lay hold upon them with all your power, knowing that while manhood's wisdom is valuable, it is not half so effectual in fighting life's battles as are the warm dreams of youth. With the sword of a worthy dream a man can defeat any adversary, scale any rampart, take any stronghold. Youth's dreams were never intended to be lost. They are stored away in the most sacred part of your nature. Plead for their return, and finding them, exclaim with David, "There is none like that; give it me."

There is the sword of your old-time enthusiasm and resolution. There was a time when you believed yourself the possessor of a divine quality that would compel your brightest dream to come true. With age you are becoming more prosaic. You are not so confident and self-assertive. You excuse your shortcomings by asserting that you are becoming "more conservative," forgetful that conservatism is very often only a refined name for dry rot or petrification. No man can win a fight with merely the weapons of conservatism. What you need is the old-time enthusiasm with which you announced your determination to leave home, the enthusiasm with which you packed the old trunk, and that fired your soul as you drove away from the old homestead, and made you determined to win fame and fortune at any cost. Time instead of deadening should kindle the fires of enthusiasm. You are living in the greatest hour of history. You are better equipped and environed and protected than the people of any generation. The quest was never so valuable; the rewards for noble endeavor never more abounding. There is no reason for any man giving up to indifference or despair. Take up your old-time enthusiasm until your heart burns with power that quickens the step and strengthens the arm. Lay hold of this conquering sword with which

you have slain many a giant and cry with the spirit of a true conqueror, "There is none like that; give it me."

There is the sword of your childhood faith in God. As you have grown older you have acquainted yourself with many theories and tried many dogmas strange and fanciful, but none of them have had sufficient strength and keenness to win your battle. You have been compelled to throw them aside, and now, in the crisis, you are compelled to face the enemy of your soul without means of defense. Then take up the sword of your childhood faith in God that filled your younger years with beauty, that warmed your enthusiasm, and made you fight single-handed while an army trembled. Kneel once more as you knelt at your mother's knee; look up with an open face toward your Father in heaven; cherish his words and keep his commandments; and from this hour no man can defeat you. In the outstretched hand of your Christian mother is the sword of your old-time faith in God. May you have the wisdom of David when he saw the sword in the hands of the priest and exclaim with all the earnestness of your repentant soul, "There is none like that; give it me.'

There is no modern improvement in making swords for moral battles. Man's progress in the

sciences is not because he has improved but because he has employed the laws of nature, laws that have coexisted with the world. The telephone, telegraph, and incandescent are not the result of man inventing electricity. Science wins all her conquests by using old swords but perfect ones, because they come from the hand of God. We need no new religions, cults, or creeds. Being man-made they have no excellence of steel or temper. The emphasis must be placed, not upon the theory, but upon the moral laws which are just as vital to the spiritual life as natural laws are to the development of science. These laws are perfect. The Ten Commandments are incomparable. Not one of them is unnecessary but each one vital to triumphant living. Add to these the new commandment of Christ that we are to love the Lord our God with all our mind and heart and soul and strength and our neighbors as ourselves, and we have an arsenal with which to conquer all the powers of earth and hell.

The world is weary following the ways of men. Righteousness alone exalteth a nation. "Back to God!" is the war-cry. "There is none like that; give it me."

XI

SPICED WINE

In his Songs Solomon referred to a beautiful Oriental custom. The bride and bridegroom drank from the same cup, that they might show the assembled guests their willingness to henceforth share all the cups of life, whether sweet or bitter. To add to the joy of the wedding banquet the cup from which the wedded ones were to drink would be passed first to the others who were seated with them. As it passed from hand to hand each guest would drop into the ruby wine a gift of fragrant spice, expressing thus the earnest wish that every bitter cup of life might be brightened and sweetened with the spices of good friendship. From the first moment of wedded life their loved ones wished that they taste of nothing save joy and happiness. In his great poem Solomon somewhat alters the ancient custom and represents the bride performing this service of spicing the wine for the husband, as much as to say, "I would render unto thee only the sweetest, the purest, and the best that earth can hold."

One of the greatest needs of to-day is a spirit

of willingness to spice the sour wines which others are daily compelled to drink. There are few greater services to render both God and man than to proffer the cup of spiced wine.

The church as the Bride of Christ should offer to him no service that is not sweet and aromatic with the spices of sincerity and love. This is the only way the world will ever be taken for Jesus Christ. The church must offer something better, more pleasing, and more wholesome than the wines that this world has to offer. It is the tendency to give to God the drainings from life's vintage. We often spend the week in pursuit of selfish pleasures, drinking the sweetest wines and giving them freely to our chosen companions, and then, in hours of worship, give to God the cheaper, sourer wines, making religious worship unwholesome, acrid, bitter, and nauseous.

Unless we do away with our acrimonious methods and make our services to God more aromatic and pleasant, the church is going to lose all hold upon her boys and girls. As a child's growing body requires sugar, so his awakened spiritual powers need that which is sweetened with the spices of gladness and whole-heartedness.

This is the only way by which the church shall get and retain its grip on men of affairs. All week long these individuals have been tasting

the acid and the bitterness of earthly struggle and competitive ambition. Sunday morning comes and they are tired, and nervous, and all worn out. What they need is a cup of spices, each bit of spice a gift of love. They need to have their minds taken away from the bitterness and acidity of life and given something that is fragrant and stimulating, something that will revive and strengthen them for future activity. This is the purpose of the church. It is to gather from all quarters of the earth all things that are good, wholesome, and attractive, and press them, as a gift of love, to the lips of every worshiper. It is to crowd each service with inspiring song, short helpful prayers, warm-worded greetings, and enthusiastic handshaking, until the silver chalice brims with gladness. Bring all your spices into the house of God and offer to Christ a pleasing gift. There is no telling how much good you can do. Look into the face of your Creator whenever you enter his temple and pray with an earnest heart: "O Lord, I would this day cause thee to drink spiced wine."

This should not only be the attitude of the church toward its Lord, but it should certainly be the spirit with which it daily faces the world. As we confront each individual we should be able to say: "I would cause thee, my brother, my sister, to drink spiced wine." We should go

through life so prepared with the spices of good cheer that the moment we found one with a cup of bitterness we could remove all its disagreeableness before it is pressed to their parched lips. We should carry spices for their cups, and not pepper for the eyes, or salt with which to rub the sores of our enemies. Spices so sweeten the cup that men forget their hatred and find themselves glad that we are here.

Give them the spices of a good disposition. Our dispositions are not unalterable gifts thrust upon us at birth, but are largely a matter of cultivation. If we associate with that which is sour and crabbed, our dispositions will, of necessity, assume the same nature. If we live a life of goodness, we will most naturally have a sweet disposition. The difference between peaches and pickles is far more than a matter of spelling. Peaches are not pickles, because they absorb the sunlight and the sweetness of the soil, until even their tartness is delicious to the taste. Pickles are not peaches because they absorb only those things which suggest and harmonize with salt and vinegar. We never think of pickles without thinking about vinegar. Their difference is in the choice of elements used in building tissues. The same thing is true with us. We make our dispositions, and because we do, we should be lovers of the aromatic spices with which God

has crowded the world. O that those who profess to love God would cease shaking pepper into others' lives, and begin to put sweet spices of a good disposition into cups already too bitter with the gall of sorrow and disappointment.

Give them the spices of a cheerful conversation. No good comes from burning the mind of the world with the acid of criticism, or distressing their lacerated hearts with the story of our personal discomforts. Give spices. Instead of telling how the rheumatism made the joints creak on their hinges, tell the story of how once you were able to leap over the fences and how you swung from the topmost branch of the old apple tree. Instead of telling about the horrors of insomnia, and how little you slept that past week, and how miserably the morning hours wore away, tell about the red bird that sang under your window and awakened a thousand memories of your childhood, tell how you noticed the fresh air of the morning awakened symphonies among the dew-laden leaves. It is so much nicer to be a candle that gives light than a smoky chimney that belches soot and cinders. The world always appreciates its bearers of good news. Happy conversation is within the reach of every one. No matter how blind we may be to the blessings of to-day, memory holds a box of spices within easy reach,

and we can fill our words with a sweetness that will cast an undying fragrance.

It is not difficult to be cheerful when we remember that we meet only two classes of people, no matter how far we travel, or how long we live. The one class consists of those who are making failure of life. Each word we speak brings to them either the bitterness of wormwood or the good cheer of wild honey. The opportunity to give encouragement to the downcast comes every day. Tired, worn, and jaded, they meet us upon every street corner and press against us at every assembly. O that they might rejoice as they taste the spices we are placing in their wine! The other class of people whom we are meeting are those who are making success of life, and who are very often the most neglected. Because they receive worldly honor we think them extremely happy, not recognizing their loneliness. The world never hesitates to press its sponge of vinegar and gall to the lips of those who are serving it.

Several years ago there was a large gathering in Calvary Church, New York City, to pay tribute to Dr. Edward Washburn. Phillips Brooks, Bishop Potter, and many other men of distinction met in that magnificent service and offered words of praise to the goodness, courage, clear thinking, untainted love and unselfish de-

votion of that mighty man. After all had ended their words of praise a little woman, dressed in black, who had been the companion of Dr. Washburn for so many years of married life, slowly arose to address the audience. Amid an intense silence she repeated over and over again these words: "O, if you men loved Edward so, why did you never tell him?" What a revelation of heart-hunger! Long years of bitterness when all might have been relieved with just a little spice, that is readily found and easily bestowed.

Bring on the spices! Let us be more affectionate one toward another. The eldest son of a large family was kneeling at his mother's death-bed saying, "You have been such a good mother." The dying woman opened her eyes and faintly whispered, "You never said so before, John, you never said that before." Let this be our motto as we meet all men: "I would cause you to drink spiced wine."

XII

THE FEVER OF HEALTH

One of man's richest possessions is the feeling of restlessness and discontent that ever pushes onward seeking something new. It is the secret of discovery. Beholding the sunset, like a thousand camp fires flashing their beams upon the crimson and purple curtained tents of ever-encamping angels, man determined to enter into and share their quiet place of rest and luxury. Hastening forward, he easily found the hills that yester-night formed the mystic camping ground, but nowhere would a torn leaf or trampled grass-blade betray a single footprint; while, looking farther westward than he had traveled, he saw the same crimson-and-purple tents stretched upon other hilltops bathed with sunset's golden light. Month followed month while man continued journeying westward in fruitless quest for peace, but in his effort to reach the cherished goal he discovered new lakes and rivers, hills and valleys, plains and forests, until a mighty continent lay ready for his children's children to build cities rivaling in power and

splendor the mystic camps of sunset's unseen hosts.

Restlessness and dissatisfaction are the secret of invention. Satisfied with their condition, China, India, and Africa yield no inventions. Their people carry water in flasks of skin, travel upon weary-footed beasts of burden, and bequeath their children nothing but tradition. Such once was all the world until some individuals of courage and determination caught the fever of health. Dissatisfied and restless, man became weary of carrying water and would not rest until he had perfected the Holly Engine that presses a cup of cool water to every thirsty lip within the city. Tired of slow travel, he compelled the locomotive to give fleetness to his feet, and the telephone to give rapid transit to his voice. Restless because the singer's voice must fade in silence, man built the phonograph to give the human voice, the frailest of all man's possessions, everlasting life. Dissatisfaction with things as they are gives invention her rich achievements.

Art follows only in the footsteps of restlessness. Every painting and tapestry hanging on palace wall, every anthem that thrills the templed throngs, and every melody that wafts its sweet cadence upon the trembling, vibrant air, exists because some sensitive soul refused to

know contentment until he had given perfect expression to the beauty that dwelt within his soul.

Only through the contagion of the divine fever can there be any reform. It was only when the restless soul of John Howard began to express its contempt for the foul floors and vitiated air of England's jails and aroused the slumbering conscience of an indifferent people that the cruel prison systems of the world were changed. Reform in England's colonial policy that made possible the unity of Canada and the founding of our own government came only when men began to chafe and grow restless under unjust treatment, and finally found expression in the burning, blazing, nervous eloquence of Patrick Henry, "Give me liberty, or give me death!"

Because men were satisfied with things as they were, the city slums became deeper, fouler depths of misery entombing thousands of human beings in inexcusable death-traps, robbing parents of hope and childhood of its lawful inheritance of health and goodness. These things continued until one poor lad grew divinely restless. A little immigrant boy of poetic temperament and lofty aspirations, by the name of Jacob Riis, cried out in protest against the injustice of foul air and darkened homes. Restless himself, he made the city restless, until New

York transformed her tenements, purified her slums, and reformed her government until she became one of the cleanest cities of the world—in many ways a worthy example for the cities of the Old World to follow. The restlessness of Livingstone redeemed Africa. The restlessness of Morris saved China. The restlessness of Thoburn is working miracles in India. When men found it impossible to sit at ease while their brothers were in chains slavery disappeared. Because men became weary with drunkenness and tired listening to the pathetic pleading of drunkards' wives and children, an aroused nation closed the open saloons and placed a ban upon the sale of alcoholic drink. Men are now becoming tired of war. They believe that the world has drunk its fill of human blood. The hour for world-wide disarmament has come, and rulers must be made to think before sacrificing their people's lives.

Here also we find the secret of mental development. So long as the human mind is satisfied with tradition it cannot grow; but let it once become uneasy under the deadening power of superstition, its very restlessness will make the mountains unlock their secrets, the plants yield tribute of health-creating medicines, the clouds unbosom their mystery, and even the starlight becomes a pencil of gold to write upon the tablet

of the sky the marvelous story of man's growing intellectual power.

No one of God's gifts is to be valued more than this feeling of unrest that he inspires within the heart, making us dissatisfied with ourselves and our surroundings, and forcing us forward to become skillful in discovery, art, invention, reform, and intellectuality.

But the beneficent influence of health's fever does not end here, for it is also the secret of spiritual development. We have all experienced these seasons of holy manifestation. Our friends said that we had the fidgets; the physician diagnosed our case as one of nervousness; we insisted that we had the blues; but all were wrong. The restlessness was a sign of health. We were not satisfied with ourselves but longed for nobility. The dust-made body was refusing to grovel in the dust. The spiritual life was beginning to assert itself through these tissues of flesh. The chrysalis had lost its desire to crawl along the ground, for new life within claimed its right to rise upon joyous wing and cleave the sunlit air. It was not a thing to be despised, to mar and gnaw the budding leaf, but something to be admired and loved of man, something sylphlike to sip from chalices of gold and silver, porphyry and lapis-lazuli. The old man of sin was dying, and through the power of Christ a

new man was coming into life; from now on he can never be satisfied with things as they were.

One of the hopes of the world's salvation is the fact that sin never satisfies the soul. Its promises are never fulfilled. Its obligations are never met at maturity. Men become restless in their sin, and through their restlessness are being led to God. Here alone can satisfaction be found, for only Christ supplies the soul with what it needs for the journey set before it. He offers guidance, saying, "I am the way." Following him no soul has ever been lost amid the bewildering maze of sin. He offers sustaining power saying, "I am the bread of life" and "I am the water of life." The dusty ashes of sin no longer choke, but for the hunger there is life-giving bread, and for the parched lip there is water. He gives illumination, saying, "I am the light," and the terrors of darkness and the dangers of the night flee away. He offers an open way, saying, "I am the door," and through him one passes out of the cramped prison house of past sins into untrammeled, unmeasured freedom. He offers immortality, saying, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." The deadening power of sin loses its hold, and one tastes the unspeakable joy of living a life that is life indeed.

Then be not confounded by the feeling of

restlessness that ever creeps upon the healthy soul. What a tragedy our lives would be had we been satisfied with our first achievements! How terribly pathetic it is to become satisfied with ourselves now, while we are so far short of what we might be, and so lamentably short of what God meant our lives to be! Curb not the spirit of restlessness as though it were a fever of death. It is health's fever. It is the call of the soul for its Creator who longs to lead us into better things.

To-morrow will be a beautiful day because to-day is so restless.

XIII

THE WISDOM OF THE UNLEARNED

The pathway of true brotherly love is bordered with deformed social conditions which must be faced and remedied. Entering the temple at the hour of prayer, Peter and John had their pious meditations interrupted by the appealing cry of a crippled beggar, who was crouching helplessly at the temple door. His haggard face, his wistful eye, his bony, outstretched hand, pleaded so passionately that the singing of the Levites was drowned and the temple call to prayer unheeded. The eyes of Peter and the beggar met, and Christlike spirituality stood face to face with the practical aspect of the world's need. Instantly the great-hearted, impetuous Peter took notice of the helpless man, whose wan face began to brighten with hope. Taking him by the right hand, Peter said: "Silver and gold have I none. I cannot meet the requirements that you ask, knowing that it is not money that you need, so much as health and strength, with which to earn a livelihood for yourself and for your loved ones. Silver

and gold have I none; but such as I have, give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." The cripple did not have time to waver, nor to debate, for the warm handclasp and the strong arm of the enthusiastic servant of Christ was lifting him to his feet and teaching him how to leap, and run, and sing the praises of God. Peter and John felt that they could not enter the temple to pray until they had proven their right to worship by practically meeting whatever part of the world-wide social needs chanced, at that moment, to confront them.

But their benevolence was misinterpreted by those who should have been the most appreciative. Overzealous religionists, who usually mistake the form for the spirit of worship, had the two benefactors arrested, accused of violating their law concerning the observance of the Sabbath day. After a night spent upon the cold, damp stones of the inner prison, the two disciples were brought before the learned magistrate to explain their conduct.

There is nothing more interesting than these unfriendly scholarly investigations of religious phenomena, conducted for the purpose of securing a rational psychological explanation. The high priests, the scribes, the rulers of city and province were seated in state, when the two

humble followers of the Social Christ, with common garb, and net-calloused hands, stood at the judgment bar and heard the question: "By what power have ye done this?" A more modern phraseology of the question would be, "State to the Court what is the psychological explanation of this purported miracle?"

It was a critical moment to these judges, for scholarship, with much ado, was studying and analyzing ignorance. But the Peter of Pentecost was not to be dismayed. He knew that the service of Christ is not formal but practical, and that his conduct in curing a lame beggar was more important to God than the observing of a thousand man-made forms and ceremonies. He knew from his former experience that ignorance need have no fear of the scoffer's sneer, or the scholar's questioning, when once the heart has been fully consecrated to the service of God. With confidence they faced the inquirers saying, frankly: "The power is not ours. This miracle was performed through the power of Christ, which you, in your learning, threw aside, and which we, in the simplicity of our untutored hearts, have accepted as the gift of God." The power of Pentecost was with the preacher again, and the judges were filled with fear and wonderment. Against their most earnest desires they liberated the men, wondering why they, as

learned men, should be influenced by men of such untrained intellects.

While Christianity has always waged warfare against ignorance in all forms, and has been the leader in founding schools and colleges, the fact remains that many of our greatest achievements have been wrought by untrained men. God often takes the weak things of this world to confound the mighty.

When an unorganized and badly scattered people needed a wise ruler, God passed by the palace doors and over the seats of learning that, in the open fields, he might crown David, a shepherd lad. When Jerusalem was a ruined city, overgrown with weed and briar, God ignored commanding generals and ruling monarchs, to honor Nehemiah, whose conquering courage rebuilt the city. When mad with power and wild excesses of sin, a mighty nation needed restraint, God stepped over the royal houses as though they were playthings upon the nursery floor, and lifted Daniel, an exile, to become the condemning conscience for them who had slain their consciences, and to become a radiant hope for those who were enslaved and had lost all courage. When the time had fully come for the kingdom of Christ to be preached to the cultured and aristocratic, he chose these two men of the fisher-craft, who, though ignorant

and unlearned, made the scholars and statesmen dumb with wonderment, while the crowned power of the age was humiliated, unable to cope successfully against the growing faith.

Christianity, while not encouraging ignorance, recognizes what the world often overlooks, that learning, in itself, has woeful limitations. When rightly employed, mental training multiplies one's powers and talents, as the circling moon gives strength and swiftness to the rising tides; but misapplied book-learning has little value. In the crises of life the general information gleaned from books counts for but very little. The knowledge that water, when reduced in temperature to thirty degrees or less, freezes, so that a dangerous river is changed into a solid highway over which one can walk in safety, is of small value to a man who is drowning in the summer time, and very few drowning men would call for a thermometer to take the temperature of the water in which they were sinking. Standing beneath a falling wall, no man is going to begin to calculate the specific gravity of the falling elements or estimate the force of impact upon his head. All learning is good, and nothing in the line of information should be ignored, for, along the more or less narrow line of its own application, each truth is of inestimable value. Each added truth that one learns pulls

up the tent stakes of the horizon and widens the world just so much, but no man can save himself with learning alone. Success depends, not upon scholarship, but upon a spotless love for God and a boundless love for man. Herein is the wisdom of life, and the weakest man or woman may possess it. All men may not become learned, but all men may become great and enthusiastic lovers of their fellow man. The little child that bends its arms in fervent hugs to show the measure of its affection; the struggling youth that stops to help a wounded companion; the widow, fighting against poverty in the tenement; the old man, patiently looking for the coming day—all these may possess the secret of royal living.

The world will be saved, not by the scholar, as a scholar, but by the loving heart; not by platitude, but by kindly deeds. Goodness is such an easy thing to acquire, that it is within the reach of all. A little London newsboy was seen to daily follow an unknown man for many blocks. When asked by an observer why he did so he responded, "When he buys a paper from me, he always smiles, and calls me his boy. He is the only one who ever called me that, and I just love to see him." Here was a life brightened and perhaps redeemed because a busy man of wealth took time to say what any one of us is

able to say each day. When King Humbert would have lost his nation he saved it, not by scholarly exhortations or startling state papers, but by visiting the hospitals of Naples and ministering with genuine affection a plague-smitten people. It was a task of love that the weakest person might be able to perform, but it saved a nation for a king.

The world will be saved. Righteousness shall ultimately prevail. The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Christ. There are no failures in God's mighty plans. We may vary in our beliefs, and differ greatly as to the process by which he shall accomplish his wise designs, but this is true: when this world is brought ultimately to the feet of Christ, it will have been accomplished not by prayer alone but by work and prayer, not by the scholar as a scholar but by the men, learned or unlearned, who have discovered the compelling and transforming power of a boundless, undying love.

XIV

THE STRENGTH OF WEAKNESS

An old man was once opening the treasury of his experience to enrich the young people of Corinth. Youth ever needs such a benefactor, for life's most difficult problem is to definitely determine upon which element or elements of life the emphasis should be placed. Like a river, life has so many contributing streams of large volume that it is difficult to decide unto which one we are most indebted for our power. There is only one way to ascertain this fact, and that is to trace the current of life-power to its source and stand, with reverent feet, at its utmost gurgling spring. But this task is hard and is fraught with danger. What youth, standing at the joining of the currents, can tell to a certainty which is the real current and which the contributing stream of influence? Among the most pathetic incidents of history are those portraying some of our richest and most favored sons of genius mistaking a contributing element of life for life itself and spending their days within the narrow winding ways of mediocrity. Youth needs the open treasury of the past, therefore

it is a rare privilege to have Paul thus open the treasure chest of his varied and triumphant experiences and tell us what is the secret source of life's richest endowment. Looking over a life of many years, covering an intense and diversified experience, enriched with mental and spiritual training, he declared to the young people of Corinth that the source of personal power is weakness.

That is the last place in the world that we would naturally look for strength, for we have always been taught that weakness is the absence of strength. To be enduring we believed that we should possess the rigidity and firmness of the rocks, forgetful that long after the red stone walls of Kenilworth have tottered into complete ruin the fragile ivy, planted by unknown hands, will still live to cover the rough, broken heap of weather-beaten stones with the graceful folds of its swaying branches. We have believed that stability depended upon rigid strength, not realizing that, in nature, the strong are the most fragile, while the weak are the most enduring.

The source of triumphant living is not the adamantine will that refuses to bend or budge, but is the will that yields itself to higher power. Only when one finds that a feeling of weakness is creeping over him, and realizes that, in his own strength alone, he is inadequate for the task,

does he possess true conquering power. One of the best hours of a man's life is when, through sickness, toil, or persecution, he feels his physical powers giving way, and his soul rises to claim the occasion for God and his humanity. Knowing that while he himself is weak, the needed power is within easy reach, a man is strong. In such a crisis, to become self-confident is to be like the hunted partridge which, seeking escape, confidently enters the trap set for his destruction. Strength comes when, overwhelmed with a sense of unutterable weakness, one flings himself at the feet of Christ, and prays as did the sinking disciple, "Lord, save me."

How very true this is in the hours of our severe temptation! No man ever sought refuge from temptation in self-confidence who, in the strain of battle, did not find his fortress crumbling into dust, while he himself suffered humiliating defeat. Simon Peter learned this truth. Strong and boastful in his self-assertiveness, he stood amid the gathering shadows of the world's darkest and most tragic night, and smiled as one who gladly greets the dawning of his wedding day. He was confident, beyond question, that he was equal to any emergency that might arise. It was easy for him to boast and proclaim loudly what he would do. Beholding the same fast-deepening shadows, Christ fell to his knees in

prayer, and with broken voice and heavy, blood-stained sweat, pleaded for his Father to remove this cup of suffering. Christ, the everlasting Conqueror, prays for escape from trial, while Peter, filled with self-assurance, bids the coming of the worst with defiant spirit, saying, "Though all men should forsake the Master, yet will not I." He boasted bravely that he was ready to die for Christ. There was a marked contrast between the ways these two met the same struggle, but the whole world knows the outcome. In the presence of trial Peter's strength was scattered like heaps of withered autumn leaves. When he was strong then was he weak. Without the passing of the cup Christ walked forth strong enough to win a world from sin, while Peter sank in shame. But when, a few hours later, we find the defeated disciple, all alone, in midnight darkness, weeping like a little child over his weakness, we rejoice, for we know now that Pentecost has found its preacher, and the world has found a mighty champion for God.

Temptation is a terrible thing. It is a band of armed brigands, storming the citadel of the soul to carry away everything that is of value. To yield is to have the soul ransacked and burned as though by fire. To face it confidently in one's own strength is gravest folly. There is only one possibility of victory. In that hour of peril,

when eternal destinies are at stake, let one feel his own weakness, and fall helplessly at the feet of Christ, and call with all the earnestness and pathos of his frightened soul, "Lord, save, or I perish!" and victory shall fill his heart with joy and crown his brow with the light of heaven.

This truth is applicable to all our sorrows. There have been hours when we thought best to meet our sorrows and disappointments with the spirit of a stoic. With clinched fists, tight-pressed lips, and dry eyes, we stood, proud of our strength, defying sorrow by bidding it to do its worst. We insisted that we were not weak like others, and that we would boldly bear our own burdens. But the end was defeat and uncontrollable grief. The burden was so much heavier and the grief was so much more bitter than we had ever expected, that we were crushed and overcome. Meanwhile at our side stood one frail and weak, whose bloodshot eyes spoke of countless nights of grief and anxiety, but whose calm face and steady voice assured us that she had gained a wonderful victory, and, in spite of tempest, had inner calm and rest. How came the victory to the frail? Because she was frail and knew that she was frail. As headed wheat saves its life by bowing passively to the stroking of the violent winds, so she bowed low at the touch of sorrow. She yielded herself to the will

of God. As Mary and Martha, in their hour of sorrow and puzzling questions, forgot everything and fell weeping at the feet of their Lord, so this woman poured out her prayer of utter helplessness to God, saying, "Save, Lord, or I perish," and in her weakness she became strong. The strength that is needed to meet sorrow comes, not from self-control, but abandonment to God; not from dry eyes, but from tears.

How true this is of our ministries to our brother man! It is not an easy matter for one to enter the Holy of holies of another's grief and sorrow, and minister unto them as a true high priest. Before the growing work of the church, as it is beginning to live up to its conceptions of Christian social service, many of our strongest Christians are becoming faint of heart; in its growing work of evangelism they become paralyzed with fright; because they cannot see how they can approach and minister to those whom they do not know. They tremble, not knowing that their very weakness is their source of strength. Rash boldness and overconfidence are not part of the true Christian's equipment. With such a spirit no one should dare to enter the sacred inclosure of another's grief. It is only when one refuses to trust in human strength or wisdom, and, possessed of a spirit of humility, goes forward in the name of Christ, that he can

work successfully for God. You may feel called upon to do works of charity. If so, go forth in weakness. Instead of polished speech upon the lip, let there be a teardrop in the eye. The hungry soul will understand and rejoice that you have come. In the hour of some one's sorrow, you may be able to give only a tender, silent handclasp; but be not dismayed. The mourning one will fully understand and thank God that he sent you unto him. You may be sent to lead some sinful soul to Christ. In weakness your words may fail, leaving you nothing to offer save a look of love. That is enough. Each sinful one will understand, and through the light of your loving look will find a pathway back to God. Only when we are weak are we strong in the service of Christ.

XV

CRUMBLING PALACES

The crumbling of our palaces does not necessarily mean loss, especially if they be the grotesque ones built in untutored childhood, or those planned in moments of unguarded enthusiasm, or given form by impractical impulse, or intended for selfish or sinful pleasure. We have never tried to live in the blockhouses built upon the nursery floor, neither do we mold our lives according to childhood fancies. There can be no progress without the compelling power of a well-guided enthusiasm, but overwrought enthusiasm is an uncontrollable power bringing moral, physical, and financial disaster. The ability to yield promptly to righteous impulse is akin to genius, but the impulses of an untrained soul are the frenzied switchmen who ditch and wreck the train that should have the right of way. When self-interest means the developing of brain and talents to establish a worthy character and beneficent influence, making one a constructive force in the community, it is not to be despised; but when self-interest becomes selfishness, the building of a fortified castle in which one lives

at the expense of others, then is the soul smitten with leprosy, and the home becomes a pest-house, not a palace. A place of sin is never a shelter, but a death-trap, its elegance of architecture and furnishings making it all the more dangerous. There are many palaces unfit for habitation. To permit them to decay and crumble into nothingness is greatest gain, for to live unworthily is not to live at all.

On the other hand there is a neglect that means a helpless, hopeless poverty from which no influence or friendship can bring deliverance. When once these palaces are permitted to crumble we become homeless outcasts, begging from a world that begrudges us its crumbs. Therefore one must consider, not only the beginning, but the upkeep of life.

There is the palace of Character that needs guarding. The beginning of the Christian life is only "the beginning." Here is the peril of our present and very popular conception of church membership. A man often feels that all that is necessary for his soul's salvation is to go through the soulless process of uniting with some religious organization, and it matters not which one he may chance to choose. "Joining the church" is looked upon as taking out a spiritual life insurance, without any thought of paying premiums through the passing years. Having his

name duly inscribed upon the records of some church gives a man confidence with which to face death, and the coming judgment, not realizing that the Church Record will perish in the flames of the last day; and that men are judged by comparing the records which God has kept with the record that each man writes upon the pages of his own body, mind, and soul. Preachers have bigger business at the Judgment than carrying their Church Records and appearing as counsel for the members of their flocks. They must appear at the Judgment and answer for themselves.

Christian living is righteous living, being right with God and right with man, in all the dealings of daily life. It is not, like vaccination, completed in one short operation, but, like breathing, an activity that includes every second of one's earthly existence. It is not moving into a furnished apartment which you can secure by making certain payments, but the building of the palace of Character. Stone by stone, the great structure is erected, its foundation resting upon the solid rock, its walls built with God's plumb line, its turrets and battlements lifted high to receive the blessings of the sky. It is not built in a day, but requires the unceasing toil of all our days, else it will crumble into hopeless ruin.

Character is not firmly established this side the grave. There are no character insurance societies. Right living on the part of youth may soon give one a reputation of worth, but after many years of faithful living have resulted in a palace, admired of men, one misdeed may become a conflagration that will reduce it to ashes; one single misspent day may cause the strongest palace to crumble and decay. The ruins of Kenilworth are beautiful because covered with English ivy; for the ruined walls of Character there is no ivy of sympathy to beautify, but the bleak and barren wreckage stands in ghastly hideousness to proclaim to all the world the story of the misspent day. Both youth and age alike must guard the palace of Character against decay.

There is the palace of Benevolence that needs guarding. In childhood we learned the difference between the cold hovel of Selfishness and the great palace of Benevolence, with its windows ablaze with light to guide our footsteps, and its hearthstone aglow with welcoming warmth. How we feared and shunned the selfish soul, not for the lack of gifts, but because, with the clear vision of childhood, we beheld the deformity of his crabbed soul! How we loved the dweller of the palace, not for his gifts, but for the beauty of his smile, the soft light of friend-

ship in his eyes, the joy-creating atmosphere in which he moved. Then and there we decided to mold our lives after the plans of that good man, and be benevolent individuals; not spendthrifts, but possessed of rich, red blood, and sympathetic hearts ever open to the beauties and needs of life. But we soon learn that the palace of Benevolence cannot be built with one deed of benevolence, no matter how large and generous it may be. The gift of some great public institution, however worthy and serviceable to the people, is not enough to mark a man as one who dwells in the palace of Benevolence. That coveted abode is built, not by gift or gifts, but by the generous spirit with which we daily and hourly meet the world. Benevolence is not a gift, nor series of gifts, but the wholesome, generous spirit which we manifest toward men. With such a spirit one builds a beautiful palace in which to dwell, but one that is very easily marred and destroyed. One selfish desire, once hardening the heart against another's need, one greedy, grasping longing or desire, and the palace beautiful crumbles into dust; and they who once rejoiced at our coming will turn away with the contempt with which all men greet unworthiness.

There also is the palace of Prayer. No earthly dwelling is so beautiful as that which one builds

for his soul through communion with God. Always situated upon the lofty heights, above the lowlands of sin and dusty ways of worldliness, it lifts its towers and pinnacles into a cloudless sky. The view is clear and unobstructed, so that one sees the affairs of life in their true relations to the great world of which they are a part. The struggles of their fellow men are in clear sight and therefore observed with sympathetic, understanding heart. The sky is close, and when the sun is set the stars peer through the shadowy canopy, and smile. The atmosphere is fresh and pure, made fragrant with the breath of heaven, and he who breathes it feels a power divine. Nothing is more beautiful than the palace of Prayer.

Nevertheless, the palace may crumble and become a hopeless heap of dust. Where once stood a vision of spirituality one can see nothing but that which is of the earth earthy. A hidden sin within the heart, that slyly steals away one's love for God; a subtle spirit of worldliness, that deadens the soul until it ceases to respond to things divine; a gnawing doubt that, like the white ants of India, honeycomb the timbers of the bravest, strongest souls—all these cause the crumbling of the palace.

The palaces of the soul, however well established, require a watchful eye and careful guard-

ing. The powers of evil are destroying elements that beat and pound upon the shelters of the soul with destructive fury. But even then, a well-built palace need not crumble. He who has the Carpenter of Nazareth as his daily Companion may build for eternity. Keeping the sayings of the Master means that the house is firmly fixed upon a strong foundation and that all its timbers are strongly knit together; so that when the floods come and the winds blow and beat upon it; when a legion of devils encamp about and lay siege upon the soul; when fires sweep, and earthquakes work their devastation to this planet, these palaces, not made with hands, and not constructed from earthly material, the palaces of Character, Benevolence, and Communion with God, shall not be moved. They shall shelter us here and be eternal in the heavens.

XVI

THE ECHO OF LIFE'S UNSUNG SONGS

We are familiar with the echo of life's unfinished songs. The unfinished songs of confidence, sung by the martyrs as they stood upon the yellow sands of the Coliseum, looking upward beyond the soft blue of the Italian sky to heights hitherto unseen, have never ceased to vibrate through the centuries. The unfinished songs of sacrifice and patriotism which were sung by our soldiers and sailors who perished in the world-wide war are still echoing in the music of every wave that laves the shores of every sea. We are all familiar with the lingering music of life's unfinished songs, but it is well for us to consider also the echo of the songs that have never found expression in word or tune.

Each soul is a minstrel whether he wills it or no, for God has fashioned a harp for every heart. There is a tradition that above the head of David's couch there hung his favorite harp. The mountain winds coming through the midnight silence would stir its strings, awaken the sleeping lover of song, and bid him weave words of love to fit the wind-wrought music. Thus were

the Psalms created. To each individual God has intrusted a priceless harp, tight drawn with silver chords of love, and sensitive to every touch of passing wind and falling sunbeam. So delicate are these heart-strings that every event of life awakens the dormant music and fills the soul with harmonies divine. Behold how sensitive they are.

The day has been dull and gloomy and you have not cared to go abroad. After a while you become reminiscent. As though led by an unseen hand you enter a quiet, unused room and lift the lid of a quaint, old-fashioned chest. You know not why your followed impulses led you there, but you are glad that you obeyed the leading, for there, resting quietly amid fragrant lavender, is a treasured gift that came from a mother's hand. It has been lying there for many years, untouched and unseen, but how beautiful its faded colors, how lovely its wrinkled folds placed there by the hands so long since turned to dust! and how, out of the dim mists of the past, it brings the soft colors and clear outlines of a dear, sweet face! There are tears in your eyes, but more and better than that, there is music in your soul. Every string of your heart is vibrant with melody.

One morning you were ill and did not care to go to the office. You were indisposed just

enough to enjoy the rich luxury of being waited upon, when, suddenly and unexpectedly, your eyes rested upon an old-fashioned picture that strangely and wondrously stirred your heart. For years it had been hanging there with its treasured memories, but you had been too busy to notice it. How charming its exquisite beauty as it greeted you from out its odd, old-styled frame. Its colors, mellowed with the passing years, carried you back triumphantly to the sun-bright days of the long ago, and the soul was stirred with music that charmed, and soothed, and inspired.

The harp-strings of the heart are very sensitive. A finger-print or tear-stain upon the leaves of the old family Bible, the frail petals of a faded blossom, the sight of a tiny yellow garment or baby shoe, a package of letters tied with ribbon, or a scrap of paper scrawled by unskilled childish fingers, just little things that no one else admires or notices, is all that is required to start the music ringing in our hearts.

To this music the soul always responds with a song. This is true even when one's musical education has been neglected. The ear may not be able to distinguish one note from another, or discern the difference between "Old Hundred" and "The Star-Spangled Banner"; the individual may know nothing about harmony, time, or

measure, when listening to the music that others have given to the world, but his own soul can always sing its own melodies. There is no note so high in the scale that the soul cannot reach it. I have heard the English lark lift its silver notes until they melted into sunshine and fell in great billows of joy upon the listening earth. Every soul can sing like that. As above the couch of David hung the harp awaiting the touch of the passing winds, so each heart is a stringed harp awaiting the touch of some common event to awaken music and set the soul to singing its minstrelsies.

However beautiful these songs, they never pass the threshold of the lips. Their sweetness surpasses the power of expression. That must have been the reason why Mendelssohn wept so bitterly at times. With all his marvelous power in weaving tones he could not give expression to the rapturous melodies which were surging through his soul. This also explains why Michael Angelo so often gave way to the dreariest despondency. Though he try never so hard, he could not express upon canvas or in marble form the heavenly symphonies that were thrilling his soul. The reason that Lord Tennyson stood for such long periods upon the cliffs, overlooking the sea, not hearing the call of an approaching friend, was that his soul was search-

ing through earth and sea and sky, for words with which to express the songs his soul was ever singing.

The deepest and most valuable emotions of life are always inexpressible. How useless is human speech in the presence of the deep feelings of awe and reverence! I stood with a friend upon one of the great heights of the Catskills. He was a genial man, and the day had been filled with merriment. Rounding a curve, we came suddenly to the edge of a great cliff overlooking the Hudson valley. At our feet were many miles of forest trees mantling the hills and valleys with the brilliant coloring of Autumn foliage. We could count a score of villages nestled peacefully among the meadows and fields of ripened grain. The Hudson River rolled its silver length in the distance, while, far, far beyond us, draped in blue, we saw the hills and mountains of another State. Beholding what, in many respects, was the most soul-entrancing revelation of nature's glory I had ever witnessed, neither of us spoke. The moments slipped by with slippered feet and the mid-afternoon became evening, before either of us broke the silence. It is sacrilegious for one to undertake to express the holy sentiments of awe and reverence in the clumsy garb of human speech. This is true of all deep feeling. Standing in the presence of a

bereaved friend, shallow souls can chatter idle phrases, but deep, healing, tender sympathy is expressed in the silence of a handclasp and unspoken word. Looking into the deep, expressive eyes of one whom we love, our lips are silent and only the tear-filled eye tells of the song the soul is singing. Have you ever been able to tell your mother how much you loved her? The real songs of the soul are of necessity the unsung songs.

These songs are the real songs, for the soul life is the real life. They may never be heard by others, but you hear them, and their words never die. They echo through the years. There is never a moment of thoughtful meditation, never a season of seclusion; never a period of sickness when the things of the world are shut out and one is left alone with the things of the soul; never a season of disappointment, or sorrow, or bereavement, or heartache, but that the hour is made blessed and hallowed with the memory of these songs, and lo, while one listens, all earth and heaven become vibrant with music and one is charmed and soothed with the echo of life's unsung songs. While exiled upon the lonely heights of Patmos John heard a song that thrilled the heaven of heavens, but none save the multitude before the throne could learn the song. That is easily understood. It was not a

song blending the varied experiences of earth together into one mighty outburst of love; it was the soul weaving all the unsung songs which no one on earth had ever heard or could ever understand into one great symphony with which to praise the God of its salvation. Life's unsung songs shall never cease to live in earth and heaven. Their echoes are our comfort here, our joy forever.

XVII

MODERN JUDASES

THE story of Judas casts a dark shadow through the sunlight of twenty centuries. His deed was more than a betrayal of friendship. Lady Macbeth, coming from the chamber of death into the candlelight and beholding her lily-white hands stained ruby red with the blood of murdered friendship, and fearing to wash them, lest the ocean's flood should tell to every rock-bound coast the blushing secret of her guilt, was not half so bad as Judas. This deed was more than the betrayal of friendship; it was the dark hand of villainy, reaching from behind the dark curtains of selfishness, that with the keen blade of greed he might pierce the unprotected breast of innocence. It was a tragedy that, with each decade's growth in love, becomes more atrocious in the eyes of men.

Named after Judas Maccabæus, one of the most illustrious characters of Jewish history, good enough and gifted enough to be chosen as a disciple, and possessing such integrity of character that he was chosen treasurer of the group, Judas began his public career auspiciously. For

three years he had been associated with Christ in the most intimate manner. He had entered cities and passed through country places, preaching and performing miracles, until returning with radiant face he said with the other disciples, "Even the devils are subject unto us." Having been lifted out of his old self, he rejoiced in the delights of noble living. Within a few weeks he would have been able to stand with Peter at Pentecost and take his place among the world's beloved immortals. Then came the awakening. He had followed Christ through the fragrant fields of the Beatitudes and under the clear sky of the Sermon on the Mount; he had seen Christ, at the sacrifice of rest and comfort, change barren lives into beauty, as the sun adorns barren branches with clustered fruit; and now, as his life was approaching the crisis, Judas could see where the road was leading, and he became frightened. He saw that the end of the Christ-journey was not toward worldly triumph, but toward sorrow, not to a palace, but a bleak mountainside, not toward a throne, but a cross; and he began to think of himself. "What shall I do?" Like one facing a panic he stood petrified with terror. Seeing the investment of three long years trembling in the balance, he did not think it businesslike to follow Christ any further. His love for money so

blinded his eyes that he could not see the moral grandeur of Christ's program. Angered and disappointed, he deserted his post, sought the seclusion of the night-time shadows to complete his plans. Well does the inspired writer add, "And it was night." Of course it was night; dark, starless, moonless night, for he had allowed his love for money to eclipse the Light of Life.

From then on there was only one light attractive to Judas, and that was the luring light of avarice and greed. Seeking for it, he found it. Like the red fires of hell it burst into flaming stream from the high priest's windows, where Arrogance and Lust for Power were plotting against the innocent. Rushing toward it, out of breath, his hands clutching his garments, his brow wet with perspiration, his eyes staring madly with greed for gold, he demanded: "What will you give me?" Shrewd and crafty, these unscrupulous leaders of men knew that the language of love and friendship could not be understood by this grasper of gain; so they used the only language he could now understand and wanted to hear—the language of the market place; and "they promised him money."

This is one of the darkest pictures in history, its black shadow reaching through the centuries, but it does not hang alone in the galleries of

death. There are others still making the awful bargain of Judas, and gladly sacrificing the innocent for the sake of financial gain.

Behold the unscrupulous real-estate dealers who force houses of immoral character into clean, residential sections of cities, betraying the cause of righteousness, injuring homes, and damning the souls of hundreds. Because immorality promises a more handsome and immediate return for the investment they become partners in the exploiting of sin and crime. As Judas went into the quietude of the Mount of Olives and brought wreck and ruin, so these men insidiously lead marauding bands of immoral workers into the best communities, well knowing that their deed means the betrayal of youth and maiden, but refusing to give it a thought, their attention fixed only on the increasing volume of business. The good name of a city or community, the value of innocence, and the sanctity of the home are nothing to these modern Judases.

Behold the employers of child labor, who, under the disguise of charitably giving employment to the poor, are reaping revenues that provide them with luxuries at the cost of blasted lives. Many of our shops, stores, and factories are but presses where the life, hope, vigor, and vision of childhood are crushed out in order to

fill to the brim the intoxicating cup of extravagance for people whose own lives are too foul and unfit to be used as grapes in their own presses. Daily the bright-faced boys and girls, the hope of the nation, are crowded out of the public school into the vats. Hour by hour their lives are pressed out until, broken in body, dwarfed in intellect, incapacitated for works of social service, falling far short of the requirements made upon their later years, they are thrown aside as useless pomace. The uncontrollable spirit of greed that places money above the value of life and happiness and goodness is the spirit of Judas.

Behold the owners of tenement houses, those breeding places of filth and sin, where little children are compelled to live and die, or live and curse the world. Their only memories of childhood will be those of the crowded alley, foul hallways, and darkened corners in which they hide in fear. The memory of a mother's face will be vague, ever hidden in the darkness and gloom in which she spent her days. Why do they not have fresh air? Greed. Why do they not have fresh water to drink? Greed. Why do their buildings not have good sanitation? Greed. Modern Judases are they all.

Behold the men who are commercializing amusements. Men and women need recreation,

and children must have places to play. The human body is not made of harder material than the locomotive, that requires rest between its trips, or, growing tired, refuses to carry its load. Therefore it is necessary to have places of recreation and exercise. But where shall the children go? The best bathing beaches of ocean, lake, and river bank are owned by money-making syndicates, and the people are compelled to pay for privileges which are their own by the right of birth and citizenship. More than this, since money is the objective, and the people must patronize their places, having no other places to go, they offend decency by catering to the coarse and vulgar element of the community, thus becoming places of moral contamination instead of places of recreation. This is also true of our theaters, moving picture houses, and amusement parks. That which is presented is very often so uncouth that modesty must hide her face.

The deadening influence of the modern movies, their teachings of sex and treatment of marriage, is clearly shown in their effect upon the actors and actresses themselves. They have enacted these parts so often, and lived in the atmosphere where these things are discussed as the predominating tastes of the people, that the unnatural teachings have become their concep-

tions of real life until the story of their divorces and remarriages has scandalized all decent society. Beside the colonies of moving picture celebrities, Salt Lake City and other Mormon strongholds seem quite tame. If the moving picture has such a demoralizing influence over the actors and actresses, who are matured men and women, what will be the effect upon the growing generations? Already the atmosphere of school and playground is vitiated. The evil effects are already manifest to every conscientious Christian social worker. To silence the protests of a righteous guarding of the morals of the young, the moving picture corporations have set aside large amounts to prevent the needed legislation regulating censorship.

The work of these modern Judases does not end here, but they insist upon the prostitution of the Sabbath day for their ungodly enterprises. For the sake of making money they are endeavoring to lead America in the same direction Europe has been traveling, and to the same tragic fate. Childhood and the Christian Sabbath are being desecrated every hour by these Judases whose one question in life is, "What will you give me?"

It is time for an aroused citizenship to enter protest against these evils. We cannot prevent Judas from having base desires, nor giving his

traitorous kiss, but we can compel Pilate, the officer, to render righteous judgment. Jesus was crucified, not because Judas kissed him, but because Pilate was a moral coward. Pilate washed his hands, declaring himself "innocent," but every man in the mob knew that he was guilty. We cannot prevent Judas betraying, but we can create public sentiment which will compel officers to reach protecting hand against the greed of our modern Judases.

XVIII

THE ADJUSTABLE UNIVERSE

THAT God should adjust a universe so that all of its forces and energies should be at the instant disposal of those who, through obedience to his laws, lay claim to them, should not seem strange when we realize how perfectly we are now adjusting our mechanical and social conditions to meet the hourly needs of the body. The water supply of many of our large cities is pumped and propelled by what is known as the Holly Engine. Its regulation is perfectly automatic. Without any apparent cause, there is a constant change in the amount of steam produced. The engineer busies himself by oiling the bearings and polishing the shafts, but seems utterly indifferent to the pressure of the steam as it relates itself to the varying demands of the great city. The fact is that the engineer does not need to concern himself with the regulating of the engine, for the people of the city regulate it for themselves.

Whenever a faucet is opened the draft in the engine is correspondingly opened, the fires burn brighter, the steam is increased, and the action of the pumps instantly accelerated. The larger

the quantity of water needed, the wider the drafts, the stronger the fires, the greater the pressure of steam, the more active the huge pumps that labor to meet the increased demand. Quickly close the faucets, stop the outlet of water entirely, and the pumps will become inactive. So perfect is this adjustment that the smallest child, many miles away, may change the speed of the engine at will. It is designed to meet the needs of every person in the city, whether it be but a cup of water to moisten the fevered lips of a little child or great streams with which to fight the mighty conflagrations that threaten the life of the city.

If man, out of common ore which he digs from the hills, can build machinery to meet the varying need of his fellow man, should it seem such an incredible thing that God, who made the human soul, could, out of his unlimited, unmeasured spiritual forces, arrange to instantly meet the need of every human soul? God can and God does. The fact is that the whole universe is so arranged. There is not a need of the soul of man that cannot be immediately satisfied, if one puts himself in obedient touch with the fixed spiritual laws that control the required forces, as, for the thirsty lips, we intelligently reach out, turn the faucet, and draw the cup of water.

It is at this point that the learned individual who loudly praises himself upon being a practical observer of life, takes most positive exceptions and insists that the weakness of the Church is this very insistence upon what, to him, seems the miraculous. He has not been able to observe that the strength of the Church is her belief in the laws governing prayer, compliance with which instantly brings all the Infinite resources of the sky to meet and fully satisfy the needs of the soul. The fault is not in God's method of procedure, but in the narrow prejudices which the critic mistakes for the laws of logic. Let us consider the laws governing prayer as revealed in an old-time incident.

Her eyes red with weeping, and her face deeply drawn with sorrow, a lonely woman was pleading with Elisha for help. Out from dark shadows, she was journeying toward deeper gloom. She had just buried her husband, on the morrow she must journey to the auction block where her two sons, her only means of support, were to be sold into slavery, to meet the debts of her dead husband. She was helpless and heart-broken in her poverty. "What shall I do for thee? What hast thou in the house?" asked the solicitous prophet. "Thy handmaiden hath not anything in the house save"—and she faltered—"save a pot of ointment." All her

furniture and cooking utensils had been sold to help meet her financial obligations. There was only one thing left, and that was the jar of ointment which every Jewish person kept for the anointing of the dead. This was never disposed of. Then came the command, "Borrow empty vessels, and borrow not a few."

The two boys were set to work. The novelty of the situation whetted their curiosity and ambition and it was not long until the mother announced that there were enough vessels and that the doors and windows should be tightly closed. Then, with trembling fingers, she opened the little jar and began to empty its contents into the larger vessels. Three smiling faces bent over the open mouths of the jars, when, to their wonderment, the little jar had filled every one of the larger ones. Now there was no need of worry. The prayer had been answered. The sale of the oil would more than meet all the demands of the creditors. It was wonderful, but natural.

Prayer is answered only according to the law of continuity. There were more than a thousand ways in which God could have come to the relief of the widow. The prophet's touch could have filled the empty vessels to overflowing, as once a prophet's touch melted granite rock into crystal streams of water; his touch could have filled the hut with abounding wealth;

common dust might have gleamed as jewels; unexpected gifts might have been poured forth as rain; but they did not. God meets the emergencies of life through the law of continuity. The way of increase is always yielding what we have to the workings of higher laws. The small cruse held the secret of the overflowing jars. Hunger comes and God asks, "What hast thou?" and the husbandman answers, "Thy servant hath not anything save a handful of grain." Then comes the command, "Take it to the well-plowed field, and pour it out." He does so, and the field overflows with harvest. For the vine that man plants God gives the purple clusters; for the seed he sows God gives a loaf of bread. Like always produces like, and in prayer is followed the law of increase. What you have saved from what you have already owned, determines the nature of God's answer to your petitions. If your heart hungers for sympathy, take the cruse of sympathy and pour it into the empty vessel of another's life. The world yields no sympathy to the unsympathetic, but never fails to return with increase each expression of tender solicitude. If you pray for comforting power to heal an old wound, take whatever power of comfort you possess, and begin to minister to hearts that break. You will find increase that will fill every empty vessel of your heart, and gladness

shall take the place of sorrow. If you are praying for financial aid, consecrate whatever strength of brain and muscle you possess to hard, clean work, and the return will richly recompense you. If you are asking God to make you of service to the world, pour out your life into the empty ones about you, and your petition will be granted. This is the law of spiritual adjustment. Along the lines of your own individuality will God prepare you for the larger task to-morrow.

We must also remember that the increase is determined, not by divine limitations, but by our own capacity. The command to the widow was, "Borrow empty vessels, and borrow *not a few*." God placed no limitations, but, rather, gave urgent command to plan for large things. She could have borrowed a thousand empty vessels and a thousand vessels would have been filled. Her blessing was determined the moment she said to the boys who were securing the jars from the excited neighbors, "That is enough, you need not borrow more." That moment she determined the amount of answer her prayers would receive. The oil ceased to flow when she had reached the limit of her preparation. What a tremendous truth! Our growth and spiritual attainments are unlimited so far as God is concerned. The possibility of development is unlimited so far as this world is concerned, for

empty vessels and empty hearts are everywhere. Our growth is limited only by the breadth of our sympathies and the scope of our interests.

Borrow empty vessels, and *borrow not a few.* What a challenge to the church of the living God! Begin to think and plan in big terms. "*Not a few.*" These are the words of One who thinks in numbers large enough to include all the grains of sand in all the oceans and all the stars of the universe. Count the forest leaves and the grass-blades and raindrops, and then ask yourself what God means when he says "*not a few.*" May the Christ of social service show the church of to-day that her power is limited only by her vision of her opportunity.

XIX

SEEING LOVE

The value of life is measured by the power of vision. The savage, tramping the diamond beneath his feet, and clinging to tooth and claw of the wild animals he has slain, represents a very narrow, restricted life, for he possessed a narrow vision. Beholding fruit-bearing trees, he saw only the crab and wild cherry of bitter taste. Looking across the open fields, he saw only the wind-tossed, tangled grass whose matted meshes made slow his travel. Along the wayside he saw only the daisy, and the thorn-mass of the wild rose bush forming a convenient place in which to hide while making observations. Because in the crab he could not see the possibilities of the Northern Spy, and because in the wild cherry he could not see the luscious Oxheart, his travel lacked refreshing fruit. Because in the tangled grass he could not see the gleaming gold of ripened grain, he had no food in time of famine. Because the weedlike daisy did not suggest the chrysanthemum, and the wild rose foretell the American Beauty, his pathway was commonplace.

Following the savage came those of wider vision, and soon the fields assumed the golden vesture of the ripened harvests, the hillsides became rich with luscious fruit, and life's pathway was fringed with beauty.

Each individual makes his own universe, using only, out of the vastness of God's provision, such things as he has eyes to see. In the broad, open, western plains, with far-extending horizon and translucent sky bedecked with bits of light to lure the seeing soul to heights heroic, lives one whose universe is no wider than his daily task, and whose zenith has never ascended above his hat-crown. Careless in observation, his universe is scarcely larger than the dug-out in which he crawls at night to sleep. Dwelling in a dark room of the crowded tenement, bound by the cords of sickness to a sufferer's bed of pain, lies one who knows nothing of the majesty of wind-swept fields, or vastness of the star-lit sky, but whose careful observations have made a zenith high enough to overarch the throne of God, and a horizon wide enough to include every need of the human soul.

The richness of life depends largely upon how many of the things of life which ordinary people call commonplace can be crowded into the range of vision. The man possessing most of earth is not necessarily a landowner, but he who,

whether rich or poor, learns to observe and appreciate the things about him. Christ never owned a foot of land. Standing in the dusty highway, worn and weary by countless deeds of sacrificial love, he exclaimed: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man has not where to lay his head." He was poverty-stricken, yet, in all the history of the world, never was one so rich as he. For him every lily held a golden casket filled with an unmeasured wealth of inspiration. For him the birds winged their way from heights celestial to sing their songs of divine forethought. Each color of the sky was a prophet proclaiming the things of God. Speaking to his disciples, men who would necessarily remain poor and homeless, he said: "Blessed are the meek [those who are not looking for thrones of authority and power, but who, in humble state, learn to see the divine vision], for they own the earth."

I know such an one. A laborer in the field, he spends his life toiling for the one he loves, living in a rented cottage, faring on common food, dressing in coarse-woven garments, and yet possessing untold wealth. With blistered feet and sweat-washed brow, I have seen him coming home, smiling with beaming tenderness, as he carefully held in his calloused hand the frail, pink petals of the first spring beauty he had

found blooming by his way. He never owned anything in particular, yet there was nothing in the universe that he did not possess and enjoy with rapturous heart. He knows that the voice of God is heard, not only in the roar of turbulent cataract, or reverberating peal of the majestic thunder, but also in the bog and quagmire.

"For in the mud and scum of things,
There's always something, something sings."

He possesses a wealth that is indestructible. When one gazes so intently upon a flower that he beholds it as it really is, he has blessed the flower with immortality and his soul with an unfading beauty. The moment he truly beholds it, God transplants it to his soul, where it can never die, but live and bloom forever and forever.

Christ came to enrich man's experience by the process of extending his range of vision, teaching him that what meekness does for magnifying his conception of the natural world, piety does for the soul's conception of the spiritual world. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God," and afterwards adding, "God is love." As humility gives one possession of the earth, purity gives one vision to behold the divine mystery of love.

One of the secrets of Christ's triumphant place in history was this vision of purity that enabled

him to see the redeeming goodness in the hearts of the world's outcasts. Christ could see love, therefore, when the pious priests were sitting with folded hands waiting for something to transpire that was worthy of their attention, he was busy in city street and country lane seeking to save that which was lost. He could see love, therefore when the self-righteous churchman, through prejudice, was blind to his neighbor's need, he was toiling in the service of the loving heart. Busy men and women could see nothing in childhood, while Christ, with purity of heart, could look down upon these little ones, and, seeing the love that bubbles up in baby hearts to overflow in kisses, smiles, and laughter, lifted them to that high throne where value is measured only in terms of love. The pious ones saw the raving demoniac standing amid the desolations of the tombs, and felt that he was too far gone to help. Looking deep within this poor man's heart, Christ saw his innate love for home, and never stopped until he had brought him into subjection to his words of power, and sent him, well and happy, to his home and family.

The zealous religionists saw only evil in the poor woman who, escaping the rough grasp of her captors, was crouching at the feet of Christ, fearful and ashamed to look upward. Looking into her heart he saw less sin than love—love

that was deep, and pure, and changeless, as only a woman's love can be; therefore, instead of killing her because of sin, he forgave her because she loved, and then bade her go and live the life triumphant.

Men accustomed to the scenes of crucifixion were not stirred when one of the crucified uttered a prayer for pardon. It was a common occurrence and put down as one of the strange expressions of loneliness; but to Jesus it was all important. Looking into the heart of the dying thief, Christ saw a worth-while love for that which was good and of finer quality, therefore he astonished even those who knew him best by lifting him out of sin and taking him with him to paradise.

Living triumphantly necessitates one possessing the vision of purity, without which one cannot see God. Mother holds the preeminent place in every life, because her true living has kept her vision clear, and she sees the good that lies deep within the hearts of her children. Her son may become an outcast in the sight of others. Filled with iniquity, and helpless in the terrible grasp of passion, he may have lost faith in himself and says: "There is no hope for me." The world hears, and readily agrees, and says that the young man is hopeless. But not the mother. To mother there is always hope. Her

boy must not be thrown away, for he is of infinite value. She never notices his sin; she sees only the soul that lies hidden like a jewel beneath the rubbish of his transgressions. Seeing the love within his soul which others could not see, because they lacked the necessary love to see, her vision became the power that not only defies but completely changes public opinion. Because she loves much, she redeems and saves him, and compels the community to accept him as one who has wandered away, but has come back to the Father's house. Blessed are the pure in heart, for unto them is given vision to see good in every one, and to behold their Lord in every event of life.

XX

THE DIGNITY OF LABOR

THERE is no liberty without toil. To enjoy the freedom of the sunshine, the germinating seed must lift and throw aside the clod which outweighs it a thousandfold. Before the blossom can unwrap its tinted petals in the sunlight it must, with the warmth of its own healthy growth, melt the wax that seals it in its winter sepulcher, and with its increasing strength tear away the rough bud-scales and hurl them to the ground. The oriole wings its way and fills the afternoon with song, only, after earnest effort, it has liberated itself from the imprisoning shell.

Toil is the golden key which God gave the human race, that it might find escape from the self-inflicted slavery of sin. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread" was not a curse pronounced by an offended Deity, but Love's whispered secret of escape from harm. Standing amid the wreck of a sin-torn paradise, man looked through the open archway of these six words—"In the sweat of thy face"—and saw the possibilities of a world-wide Eden. Beholding the fruit begin to fail, and the greensward

become tangled with brush and bramble, Fear said: "You shall die of hunger." "In the sweat of thy face" revealed broad acres filled with health-giving ripening grain and orchards laden with luscious fruit. Beholding the lakes become stagnant, and the river beds becoming dry and parched, Fear said: "You shall perish of thirst." "In the sweat of thy face" revealed vineyards adrip with purple wine, and desert lands abloom with beauty because man would learn to train the mountain streams to follow where he led. Yea, more, "In the sweat of thy face" opened a pathway through which Hope ran to find salvation from the deadly power of sin. Coming back, with face aglow, that bright clad Angel bade man first to give his strength in building an altar on which to offer heartfelt thanks to God, who had made the human hand with which to toil and rebuild paradise.

Happy and fortunate is the man who learns to do his daily stint of work with a cheerful heart. To him shall be the joy of understanding that the ordinary duties of life are not burdens sent to crush him to earth, but blessings through which he is to work out his own salvation.

Behold how man's labors have redeemed the world from barrenness. Soft, yielding swamps have become hard-paved streets of famous cities, over which the unappreciative multitudes

walk or ride in perfect comfort. Where once the heated winds blew the drifting sands to-day the gentle zephyrs fan the rich, green meadows. Where once the untrained, tangled vines broke down the struggling tree upon which they clung, the vineyards yield their purple clusters, and the orchards give forth their wealth of sweet and luscious fruit. Where once the wild weeds threw their choking pollen to the wind, the aster, rose, and proud chrysanthemum wave upon graceful stems and toss their pretty petals to and fro. Where once the savage stretched his tents of skins, brown-stone mansions lift their open portals in invitation to the weary sons of toil. By the sweat of man's brow, by the toiling of the multitudes, we are saved from desolation and made to dwell securely among the gardens.

Toil saves from sickness. Without the putting forth of physical effort all men are weaklings. To be a producer, to change the strength of brain and muscle into that which is of value to his fellow man, is not only necessary if he would play his part in the great social institution of which he finds himself a part, but it is necessary for his own mental, physical, and spiritual salvation. Grinding out his days in unceasing industry, many a man curses his lot and wishes earnestly for idleness, not knowing that toil is

the making of a man with strong muscles, firm flesh, large lung capacity, and good digestion, for toil forces the blood in rapid circulation. Honest toil is the best tonic. When asked what was the secret of his good health, a great statesman responded, "Hard work." Overfed, full of gout, and ill humored, a certain man of ease requested a celebrated physician to prescribe for him. "Live upon sixpence a day, and earn it," was the advice. Over one half of the invalids of the world could be almost instantly cured, if they would concentrate their attention, and direct all their strength, in carrying forward some worthy enterprise. Caring for a garden is a good preventive for consumption. Labor means exercise, exercise means health. Common toil is God's prescription by which we are to work out our salvation from many days of sickness and depression.

Labor preserves us from needless sorrow. Imagine the condition of Adam leaving Eden with all his faculties save that which would enable him to concentrate his energies upon some worth-while task—with the power to think and ponder over the hardships of his fallen situation; with the marvelous power of memory to recall his faded days of gladness; with the power of a good imagination, to paint fairer, brighter pictures for the future, and yet with-

out the power to organize these faculties for action, thus having no force of character with which to achieve. Such life would be worse than death, no matter what evils death might bring. But through the gracious promise of the sweat-washed brow man found surcease for sorrow in attempting to build a better garden for himself and little ones. There is no happiness save that which results in using one's strength and talents in honest endeavor. Idleness breeds discontent, worry, and fear. It adds a thousand pangs to every grief and sorrow. The most unhappy and therefore the most unfortunate people in the world are those who have the financial resources to sit in idleness and nurse their grief. Better by far be the poor woman who leaves her dead, and goes to scrub the floors of a public building, for in her honest toil she finds a healing, comforting touch. Toil makes one forget his grief, soothes him with a gentle hand, and permits the grace of God to heal the wounded soul and broken heart.

Labor is a strong tower that shields one from the onslaughts of temptation. It is the idle hand that Satan seeks. One half of our incarcerated criminals owe their position to the fact that they refused to accept the protecting power of toil to keep them in the way of righteousness. Having nothing to do, they fell in with evil companions.

Having nothing to do, they partook of questionable amusements. Having nothing to do, they followed the evil leading of their passions. Having nothing to do, sin and disgrace made them easy captives. One way of salvation is to escape from temptation, and one of the best ways to escape temptation is to be so busily occupied with clean, honest, manly endeavor, that the devil has no access to the mind with either spoken word or secret thought. Work out your salvation from temptation.

Labor may also contribute largely to the developing of Christian character. There would be no backsliding in our churches if those who profess the name of Christ would engage in his great enterprise of saving and redeeming the world. The growing spirit of indifference, that is paralyzing so many of our religious activities, could not be, had men not become idlers in the Kingdom. Business men look upon the church and say that it is weak because it has no program. This is true. We lacked a program, not because we had no program, but because we refused to follow the one that God gave us. The church is far from being dead. Those who have kept true to their Divine Lord, and have humbly, but earnestly worked his works, have been saved from all these temptations to sin and worldliness, and their ardor to-day is

brighter than on the day they first gave their hearts to Christ.

Then let us get to work. Labor cannot save us from the penalty of sin. Nothing save the grace of God can do that for us, but it can save us from barren surroundings, from much of our sickness, from the deadening influences of sorrow, from the power of many of our most dangerous temptations, and aid us in spiritual development. Work with a good will. Let no man laugh you out of its benefits. Say to the world, "Yes, I am a laboring man." Let no blush come to your cheek, unless it be because you are not a better and more earnest workman. Labor with the knowledge that while you are at your task you are ranked with the mightiest and most illustrious characters of the world. Labor adds to dignity. Hard, honest work gives self-respect. Toil saves one from the life of a parasite, enabling him to pay his own way, at the same time leaving the world brighter and richer because of his toil. The richest jewel that ever adorned the brow of man is not in the King's crown. It is the beaded sweat that stands upon the tanned forehead of an honest laborer. Wear it with the dignity with which a king wears his crown of gold. In the light of God's approving smile it will pale and make insignificant the crown jewels of all the nations.

XXI

ABOVE THE COMMONPLACE OF SIN

Individuality is one of God's ways of expressing his greatness. His voice penetrates the centuries like the sound of silver bells, but there is never an echo. No duplicates are ever found among the works of God's creative power. He gives his gifts unto the world with boundless generosity, but through the centuries no single gift has ever found its counterpart. Everything coming from the hand of God is original, unique, entirely dissimilar to anything else in the realm of nature. No two oak leaves are alike. They may be cut from the same pattern, so that, no matter where you find them drifting in the winds, you instantly recognize them, saying, "These are oak leaves"; yet, of all the millions of leaves that have unfolded upon branches of the oaks of countless ages, no two have been identical in size or form or in the delicate tracery of the tiny veins which are as delicate as hoarfrost, yet strong as leaden pipes.

God never duplicates. The wild rose is a simple flower, possessing but five petals, held securely in the golden chalice of pollen-laden

stamens. Nothing could possibly be more liable of duplication than this quaint flower of simple garb, yet of all the wild-rose blooms gathered by lovers' hands and pressed to maidens' lips, of all the wild-rose blooms that grace the old-fashioned gardens and trellis the fences of the country roads with their picturesque, sublime simplicity, no two are alike. God so respects the pretty things about which human sentiment revolves that no two are cast from the same mold. Consider the blossom that you once kissed, and pressing, stored away. It is hidden in a secret place, intended for no eyes save your own, and viewed only through the clear tears that memory revives. Guard it with the tenderest care, for God will never make another blossom just like it. He respects the tender affections of your heart that chose this blossom from a lover's hand to be the sweetest, fairest blossom of your life.

When a mother stoops and plucks a blossom from her baby's grave, covers it with mingled tears and kisses, and puts it away between the leaves of the family Bible, thus binding in one cover the sweetest sentiments of this world and the best hopes and aspirations of a better world, she does a beautiful thing, and our heavenly Father so honors her love and reverence for her precious dead that, though a thousand centuries

come and go, he will never make another blossom just like that.

We love all mountains because of their rugged strength and majesty, yet no two mountains are alike, for to the mountains God has given personality. The Rockies stand like naked giants with knotted muscles ever ready to grapple with storms that smite their rugged sides, rejoicing, like strong men, at the ease with which they break the strength of their adversary, and hurl the whirlwind, like a helpless zephyr, into the mighty chasms at their feet. The Alps are like a procession of kings, bejeweled and berobed for coronation day. To see the Alps is to have a holiday and have one's soul thrilled with boyhood's wonderment and praise. The Catskills are a languid group of charming country folk with whom you can sit and chat, and feel the magic wonderment of childhood creeping through the soul, as you listen to quaint voices repeat their myths and legends. No two mountains are alike, for God likes versatility in heaped-up piles of rock as much as in fluttering leaves and blooming flowers.

No two sunsets are alike. The hanging tapestries of the west may be woven in the same looms of mist, and dyed in the same vats of scarlet, purple, red, and orange; they may be laced with the same golden strands of unraveled

sunbeams; and their drapery may reveal the self-same angel touch, yet no two sunsets are alike, each having its own individuality, and living forever as a master painting to beautify the walls of memory. Well do youth and maiden stand with clasped hands as they face the sunset. Let them feast upon its gorgeous beauty until their hearts are filled with light and love, for they shall never see another sunset just like that. Returning to the valley's old familiar paths, where they shall walk together amid their mingled lights and shades, they shall rejoice through many years because of the brilliancy of that one sunset which God made for them, and for them alone.

This love for originality is seen in the play of the wild waves' crest whose molten silver falls into beads and necklaces and pendants of unequaled workmanship to fill the unseen jewel caskets of the deep.

What is true of the natural world is also true of man. Consider the variations of the human face. Reflecting upon the limited number of features, one is amazed to think that such an infinite combination of facial forms and expressions can be created. There are only two eyes, two ears, one nose and one mouth, and yet out of that small combination, behold what God hath wrought! From the soft, pink rosebud of

a baby's smiling face, looking with wistful wonderment at a newly found world; through all the charming sweetness of maiden's cheek and love-laden eyes; through all the grandeur of the hero's chiseled features; through the glory of motherhood smiling affectionately upon her little brood; through manhood making battle for home and righteousness—through all these until, at last, you behold the unequaled beauty, majesty, grandeur, and dignity of old age, no two countenances are alike.

The glory of God is revealed through individuality. No two persons are alike in form or feature, gift or grace. No two minds have exactly the same characteristics. No two souls look upon life from identical viewpoint, so that each one varies in his conception of events and expression of art and letters. A king wears the crown of his predecessor, but for each brow God has fashioned the fairer crown of individuality. Men, as God made them, are not pegs to be placed in holes, but kings, to sit upon thrones and rule kingdoms all their own. "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee," are the words of Jehovah when he wished to impress Jeremiah with the infinite care with which he had been prepared for a noble work.

To endeavor to reshape this divinely appointed life and mold it after an earthly, man-

made pattern is the height of folly, yet this is the demand of very much of our modern social life. Society employs a system of repression, the subduing and crushing of deep emotions, and substituting a shallow artificiality. It curbs all naturalness in development and demands a conformity to certain rigid molds in which every word, gesture, thought, and impulse must be cast. Instead of employing the art of expression, permitting the deep feelings to find normal outlet, and allowing the salutary unfolding of individual strength and grace, they check and curb and repress until the beauty and normalcy of life is gone. Our present system of society custom and usages cannot produce great character.

Failing to recognize individuality as the universal plan, many educators mistake their function, endeavoring to mold men according to their conceptions rather than instructing men. Instead of leading the mind away from the narrow cloister of tradition, form, and ceremonialism, into the open air where it can function normally, and unfold its strength and beauty in perfect individualism, many intellectual leaders continue the practice of pitilessly dwarfing minds and stunting souls.

Sin also leads to the commonplace. Realizing that man's strength lies in developing those

characteristics that mark personality, the arch enemy of the soul is ever endeavoring to destroy them. He tempts to sin, knowing well that there is no other agency so powerful in destroying individuality. Sin never lifts men upward toward lofty heights but always levels downward. It knows no royalty of character, so it tears down thrones, casts man's crown aside, blurs the eye, palsies the nerve, blotches the countenance, deadens the brain, hardens the heart, and makes its victim a member of the common herd. Sin is not error; it is poison that stunts the growing aspirations, dwarfs the spiritual nature, lowers spiritual vitality, and completely destroys all the royal gifts of God that would distinguish one in character and achievement.

Therefore righteousness must be preached as never before. Only through virtue can one lift himself above the commonplace and his individuality reach its maximum power. Wrongdoing destroys while right living makes possible the complete development of all the noble faculties of the soul, permitting one to experience the fullest possible realization of life. Men must not be repressed by the foolish processes of a misguided social, educational, or evil custom. Righteousness must be preached that youth may know the freedom of goodness and the joy of righteousness. As birds greet the dawn, by

rising on rapturous wing and filling the blue with exultant song, let youth and maiden greet the coming day with gladness as they rise above the commonplace of sin. The Divine plan for their lives must not be marred by sin or foolishness. The uniqueness and originality of God's plan are the secrets of success. The joys of righteousness are too valuable to exchange for the misery and heartache of a wasted life.

XXII

THE INVESTMENT OF A LIFE

THE problem of investment provides much of the romance as well as the tragedy of life. The fascination of expending one's energies or possessions in legitimate undertakings holds all men spellbound, whether it be the peasant investing in seed for the coming harvest, the newsboy buying his bundle of papers for the evening trade, or the merchant purchasing wares against the changing styles and fitful customs. The investment proving good furnishes the joy and romance of existence. The investment proving bad causes the tragedy that shatters the brain, breaks the heart, smolders the homefires, and sends multitudes reeling and cursing into the darkness.

All men are investors. Some of them invest their brain. Finding that God has honored them with an intellect capable of development, they have closely applied themselves to study and research, until the meanest flower enlarges itself into an Eden where each petal vein becomes a winding pathway leading to fountains of nectar that ever sport and play amid the golden pillars

and tapestry of stamen and pollen. They study until oak trees become mighty ships, iron fashions itself into sky-scrapers, forked lightning becomes a servant of the humblest child, sunbeams become physicians, stars become pilots, and the sky a playground in which the mind leaps from world to world and wheeling constellation to wheeling constellation. Very rich indeed are the dividends coming to him who invests his brain against the world's ignorance and mysteries.

All men are investors. Some men invest their bodies. They bend their back to the burden until the blood vessels stand out upon their temples like silken nets. They give the strength of their arms to the hammer and drill until the flinty cliff becomes broad highways beneath their feet. They toil until mountains become winding corridors leading to chests of silver; valleys bloom with harvests, and frail cocoons become silken robes. They toil, earning dividends of daily bread, a happy home, and the consciousness that the world is better for their toil.

All men are investors. Æsthetic in temperament, some invest a love for the beautiful. They find rhythm in swaying tree branch, harmony in the moving of winds, music in chirp of crickets, symphonies in the carol of birds, poetry in

gleaming lights upon the water, visions of glory in the morning and evening sky. They adorn our cities with temples, fill our homes with immortal songs, transform white marble into immortal shapes, and fill our galleries with visions of sunsets that never fade, trees whose leaves are never driven by the November winds, children who never grow up, and family circles unbroken by death. Dividends surpassing belief belong to these true and faithful lovers of the beautiful.

All men are investors. Some men invest their gift for business. They concentrate their energies on the art of trade until gigantic ships cut the ocean waves, steel rails join nations and continents, wire threads bind home to home, keeping each ear within instant reach of loved one's voice, refrigerator cars that bring the fruit of the tropics to the Christmas table, and means of transportation that finds a world-wide sale for the handiwork of the humblest toiler. All honor to such men! Nations do not coin currency for business. Business is the mint whose products fill the coffers of the nations.

All men are investors. Some invest their heart's affections upon things divine. Their ears are closed to evil and they know not concerning things that blight and blast, scorch and consume the soul. Their eyes are closed to the suggestive, therefore evil finds no lighted path-

way to their imagination. Their hands are held firmly and will not touch that which contaminates. Their lives are like unto that of the Lord Jesus, and therefore they are the children of freedom. Their words drop like the dew, each crystal drop reflecting the heavens toward which they journey. Their smiles are like unto sunbeams upon harvest fields, making the grain sweeter of kernel and more golden of husk. Their voices melt with tenderness as ripe grapes drip wine. Their opinions are permeated with charity as ripe fruit is filled with fragrance. Their coming is like that of a messenger from a friendly king.

Each man is an investor, whether he invests his intellect for education, his body for physical betterment, his æsthetic nature for art, his business sagacity for prosperity, his heart for the fellowship of God, receiving benefits and meeting his honest obligations to the world. Honesty demands that each individual should be such an investor, investing himself and all that he possesses, for he who refuses to do so robs his fellowman. For such hell is a moral necessity. He who refuses to yield himself to the plan of God must not be disappointed when he finds himself outside of God's plan for his happiness and welfare.

There are no safety deposit vaults for God's

gifts to man. When times of financial panic come, frightened and panic-smitten men withdraw their currency from circulation, store it away in a vault, thus hastening the national disaster. Panics come when men refuse to invest. In an hour like the present, when moral forces are facing a panic, when organized forces for evil are using every possible unprincipled means and method to press righteousness to the wall, no man has any right whatever to withdraw and hide his talent. Every lover of truth, every believer in immortality, should give the best he has, every faculty and talent, the widest possible circulation. Invest, and invest heavily, is the order from on high. Invest in order to restore confidence to the people of God. Let them feel encouragement by seeing that the very best you have is at the disposal of all mankind. Refusing to do so makes one a miser deserving of nothing save the curse of man. Upon the wholeness of the investment depends one's destiny on the Day of Judgment. To the one who, by investment, has increased his talent, God says: "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into joy." To the one who refuses to make investment of his life, he says: "Take away that which he hath." The Judgment hinges on the problem of investment.

That we make not fatal mistake let us remem-

ber that no talent is properly invested unless done so with a reverent purpose. Talents may be invested aimlessly and without results. To bring paying dividends the investment must be backed by a life having a noble purpose. To illustrate, if you were compelled to sum up your entire life in one sentence, what would you be able to say of yourself? What one predominant characteristic do you recognize as being the index of your life? You reply, "I am a student." Is that all you can say? You have invested brains, are an educated man, but is that all?

Unless you have applied your intellect to successfully solving some problem for those who, denied your blessings, are ignorant and superstitious, your knowledge is valueless and will be buried with you. You may be a toiler, but unless you have tugged away and lifted, with all your might, at the world's burdens, your strength will go with you to the grave. If your investment of the æsthetic does not make the world more beautiful, it is valueless. Are you successful in business? Is that all that can be said? You may be worth many millions of dollars, but if your gold has never gleamed in true philanthropy it will crumble into dust with your body. You may be good, but unless your goodness expresses itself in sacrificial service, it is worthless.

That which is enduring demands, not the investment of talents alone, but the investment of the whole life. To give your talents indifferently marks you, not as an investor, but as a spender, and anyone can spend money, especially inherited money. To make an investment demands a whole life centered upon one holy and noble purpose, for which one spares neither toil nor sacrifice, energy nor time, until the united efforts become permanent in the world and forever identify your name with that noble purpose. To invest wisely is to endow one's name until it stands out the rich embodiment of some worthy purpose, as the name "Dante" stands for poetry, the name "Abraham Lincoln" stands for the emancipation of the slaves, the name "Garibaldi" stands for liberty, the names of Peabody and Shaftesbury stand for benevolence, and the names of Wesley and Moody stand for the redemption of a world.

XXIII

THOUGHT PLANTING

THERE is nothing more common, and seemingly insignificant, than the planting of a garden. There are the simple upturning of the sod, the mellowing of the soil, and the burial of a hard-shelled seed. Let a chemist analyze the soil, and a scientist examine the seed, and they will be unable to find anything signifying relationship between the two. There is nothing, so far as the human eye can see, to suggest that the combination of seed and soil would be other than the combination of stone and stubble. But when once planted all the universe knows about the little brown seed. The earth and the seed were made for each other, and no sooner do they come in proper contact than the whole universe is set in motion about and for the development of that buried germ. There is not a cloud floating afar nor a star gleaming mildly in the distant blue that does not exist for that tiny seed until, through the ministration of sunbeam and moonlight, shower and baptismal dew, the seed arises, clothed in the glory of a resurrection, to lift itself in right royal grandeur above the clod.

No one can explain how the inanimate can thus become living tissue, but the sun keeps warming its leaves with caresses, and the kindly winds bring tribute from distant lands; and the guarding stars keep sending their benign forces, and the cool hand of the darkness offers its chalice of dew, so that the seed becomes a tree, whose nectar attracts the bees and butterflies, and whose wide-extending branches become the home and playground of the birds.

There is nothing seemingly more insignificant than the planting of a garden unless it be the beginning of a good and useful life. It is simply planting a thought in an ordinary human brain. The wise philosopher may examine the thought and pronounce it quite commonplace; the grammarian may test it and say that it could be constructed in a more exact and polished manner; the physiologist may examine the brain and pronounce the texture of its convolutions as being most ordinary. There is nothing anywhere to indicate that the combination of that particular thought and that particular brain could result in anything particularly extraordinary. The possessor of the brain may feel no different after the planting of the thought and have no presentiment of what it shall mean to him in the years that follow. But the whole universe knows about the thought planting. As the stars remem-

ber the buried seed, so all the divine forces of earth and heaven are set to work about the planted thought. Days and weeks may pass without the world observing any appreciable results, and it may even forget the planting. But God has not forgotten. He is remembering it, guarding it with divine care, and the results will appear sooner than we think.

That is the reason, I believe, that Christ took the mustard seed for the foundation of a parable. The seed is not only one of the smallest, being so little that it can slip unnoticed from your grasp, and hide within the crevice of a clod, mocking your solicitous search, but it is of most rapid growth. Within a fortnight it will overshadow the garden, and before the season is ended will tower twelve to fifteen feet in height, its sturdy branches affording shelter, and protected nests, for many birds. Divine thoughts within the brain are capable of this marvelous development. The planting may be an unattractive thing to do; the mind itself may be as unresponsive as the soil at the first planting of the seed, but God has not forgotten his truth, and all the universe is working for its fullest development. Soon, very soon, will it manifest its marvelous nature by rapid growth and bloom.

Here is a little lass, living among the forests of Domremy. Day by day she watches the soldiers

of hostile powers tramping along the dusty highways to devastate the land she loves so dearly. Her heart aches as she sees her people languishing helplessly under the heavy yoke of oppression. Standing with tear-filled eyes one day she hears an old man say: "God will one day raise a deliverer for the French." Amid the dust arising from the tramping of an invading army a thought was planted in the mind of a child.

Here is a little girl at Ledbury, near the Malvern Hills, sitting in her father's dooryard, looking at the mysterious letters of a Greek book, whose secrets refuse to yield themselves to her inquisitive brain. Disappointed, she buries her face in her book and weeps, only to be found by a kind friend who picks her up and whispers in her ear: "There, do not cry. A little girl can learn Greek if she tries." The world goes along as usual, not knowing that a new thought has been planted, and that girls may learn Greek as readily as do the boys.

Here is a little boy, standing by a harpsichord, watching his father's fingers find the notes upon the ivory keyboard. His soul is filled with delight as he listens to the melodies that arise. Beholding the nervous twitch of the tiny fingers longing to earnestly and reverently touch the music-making keys, the father bends low,

and says: "Be patient, son, and keep loving your music, for some day you will be a great musician."

Here is a little boy drawing with charcoal upon the white walls of his mother's kitchen, while a precious old grandmother sits watching the young artist. Taking him in her arms, she said, "Do not paint to rub out, paint for eternity." Commonplace words uttered in a commonplace home by a very commonplace old lady.

Here is a bright-eyed little boy kneeling at his mother's side to say his prayers. Having finished his petitions, the Christian mother says, encouragingly, as she strokes his head, "Only be good, my precious boy, and God will use you to help the thousands."

We have seen these five persons putting ordinary thoughts in what seem to be ordinary brains. These five children felt no enraptured thrill, the ones who sowed the thoughts did not remember the day. But all the universe of spiritual power knew about the planting, and consequently the seeds grew. Watch the little girl among the forests of Domremy, leaning against the trees, buried in thought, and listening to the voices that ever speak of redeeming France. Watch the little girl bending over her Greek book, day after day, finding the key that

unlocks the beauty of Homer and Thucydides. Watch the little lad sitting past the midnight hour, his long curls falling in rich folds about his face as he bends over the harpsichord awakening the slumbering strings. Watch the little lad gathering clays of various colors and grinding them into paint, which shall, at the touch of his brush, awaken angels upon the canvas. Watch the little lad who learned to pray at his mother's knee, gathering the students of Oxford about him to spend the evening hour in prayer. God has not forgotten the good thoughts sown in the days gone by, and all the spiritual forces of the heavens are working for their most complete development. Soon the little lass of Domremy, obedient to the call of the voices, mounts her charger and compels King Charles, the invader, to flee and give back the government of France to her people. Soon the little girl who studied so diligently to learn Greek will become Mrs. Elizabeth Browning, to make the centuries happy with the music of her poems. Soon the little lad at the harpsichord will become the mighty Mozart, whose music lingers like the sweet fragrance of dew-wet flowers. Soon will the little boy, drawing with charcoal, begin to paint for eternity, and the "Angelus" and "The Man with a Hoe" begin their deathless career, as a tribute to toil, and

an eternal protest against oppression. Soon the boy of Epworth and the youth of Oxford will become John Wesley, the leader of the great revival which swept England at a critical period and directed her on the right track.

No one can understand the mystery of the growing seed, or the greater mystery of the growing thought, but each individual can have such a love for childhood and its future that he will guard with jealous care each word that leaves his lip, determined that in the sowing nothing but good seed shall find lodgment in any heart. An evil thought planted in a child's mind grows into a ruined life and blasted character. Let not even the idle word be an evil one for fear of the harvest. What an incentive to become good husbandmen planting righteous thoughts in the minds of childhood, looking forward to harvests that shall never end!

XXIV

THE ROSARY OF TEARS

God meant man to be happy. The sweetest music of this world is clear, ringing laughter. Beside its resonance the majestic voice of the cataract, the rolling melody of dashing billows, the gurgling ripple of the sun-kissed streams, the thrilling throb of the wild bird's song, the merry chirp of the cheerful cricket, the lyric of the wind-tossed leaves are as nothing. Better one sudden, spontaneous outburst of childish laughter than all the symphonies and oratorios of the long centuries. Nothing can equal it. It comes with the spontaneity of a geyser, rolls out upon the atmosphere like a volley of salutes, thrills like martial music, its quick vibrations making the sunbeams tinkle like silver bells. It is contagious, causing the facial muscles of our friends to relax and begin to run and leap into the radiant smiles, their vocal cords to burst into song, and the whole world becomes a better and happier place for all mankind.

As the sunshine makes battle with shadows, so men and women should wage warfare with everything that depresses. Children have a right

to laugh, and youth has a right to rejoice in the morning light of life that floods the pathway with the bright and brilliant colorings of hope. We must not be too exacting with others, neither must we endeavor to abnormally repress our own feelings. There is a restraint that is not culture and a self-control that is not temperance. Some people would be far more honest in their dealings, and have better rating in their own community, if they did not exercise such an exacting self-control over their deep feelings of honesty, justice, and brotherly love. There is a boundless strength in emotion, therefore laughter and happiness are absolutely essential. Let happy hours be golden beads, which, strung upon the silken cord of memory, will become a rosary with which to count our prayers.

Laughter is essential, because of its relationship to tears. In the truest sense pure tears and pure laughter are one. It requires a raindrop to reveal the hidden beauties of the sunbeam. Beholding the rainbow spreading its many-colored folds over the dark shoulders of the storm cloud, we utter exclamations of gladsome surprise. How marvelously beautiful it is! But every sunbeam would be a rainbow if only it had its raindrop through which to pass. It requires vapor to reveal the hidden depths and treasures of the sunbeam. Tears are to laughter what

raindrops are to sunshine. They reveal the deeper meaning of our joys. Without them we should never appreciate or understand the brighter moments. When we count each hour of happiness as a golden bead, we must consider each teardrop as a crystal or polished diamond, to gleam upon the rosary of the heart.

Sincerely pity the man who has lost the art of shedding tears, for he has, through self-control, restricted his emotions, so as to exclude life's best experiences. Without a tear-moistened eye one cannot clearly comprehend the brightness of the sky, the majesty of the sea, the commanding splendor of the mountains, or the wealth of gold that lies buried in every human heart. Without tears one can never experience the rapturous joy of truest love or holiest patriotism. The greatness of the soul is measured by the depth of its emotions, and the extent of influence is determined by the readiness with which one permits the deep emotions to shed their glory.

Herein is hidden a secret of triumphant power. The greatest victories are won, not by gun and cannon, but by deep emotions expressed in tear-dimmed eyes. Great achievements are wrought by men who can feel keenly and deeply. Behold Garibaldi conquering a great Italian city. A thousand soldiers, armed with rifles, and sup-

ported with heavy artillery, stood ready to oppose him. Commanding generals, with drawn swords, stood ready to give command to fire the moment he made his appearance. This was the day that he had announced that he would take the city. Hours passed and neither he nor his army came in sight. Finally, in the afternoon, amid a cloud of dust, a carriage is seen rapidly nearing the city. Every eye is strained to see its passenger, when lo, above the dust, rises the stalwart form of the great Italian. Without gun, sword, or protecting soldier, the great general who has come to take the city, is standing erect in an open carriage, his arms folded in peace. Each defending soldier is ready to obey command, but no command is given. In the presence of such remarkable courage each officer is motionless and speechless. No moment of Italian history was more tense. Suddenly some sympathizer shouted, "Viva la Garibaldi!" and in an instant every weapon is dropped and Garibaldi takes the city and holds it as his own. The power to advance in the face of great odds, with no weapon save a burning heart and tear-filled eyes, has wrought more victories than we know.

To cry is not weakness, for tears are evidences of strong character. We have always loved Mark Twain, enjoying his travels as much as he,

and laughing away dreary hours with his bubbling humor. But humor never revealed the true man he really was. It was not until his daughter died, and he sat all alone at home on Christmas day, amid the unopened gifts, and broken hopes of life, and wrote the matchless story of her death, that the world caught glimpse of the real Mark Twain. Beholding her lying there so quietly, he said: "Would I call her back to life if I could do it? I would not. If a word would do, I would beg for strength to withhold the word. And I would have the strength; I am sure of it. In her loss I am almost bankrupt, and my life is a bitterness, but I am content; for she has been enriched with the most precious of all gifts—that gift which makes all other gifts mean and poor—death." It required the tear-drop to reveal the real character of Mark Twain.

While for our friends we would have nothing but golden hours, for ourselves the rosary of tears is the most precious treasure we possess. None other creates such a spirit of devotion, none other so thoroughly prepares us for conquest; none other opens the heart to those diviner emotions which should thrill the inner life of all. The golden beads will become tiresome, but the crystal rosary of tears will always be attractive. Count over its beads. There are the large, fast-falling tears of childhood. Tell

them one by one, and behold how they bring back the holy memories and yearnings for childhood purity and childhood faith. Hold fast those blessed beads that were once kissed away by a mother's lips, but still sparkle in the light of her precious love. There too are the glittering tears of youthful ambitions, when the heart burned with passion, the brain whirled with plans for conquest, and the eyes were moist with tears of hope. How precious those tears that have long since ceased to flow! But they are not lost. We still have them on our rosary when we offer prayer, and the touching of them revives our old-time hopes. There also are the tears of love. The busy, all-consuming fires of worldly ambition cannot dry them alway. They gleam in the eye every time memory presents the portrait of that precious face. How wonderful to love until the eyes blind with tears of ecstasy!

There too are the priceless tears of sympathy. The sight of another's wrong or sorrow unloosed the fountains of the deep, and your heart responded. In order to right the wrong you gave yourself to work of reform, and made your influence a powerful factor in the remaking of the world. There, gleaming more beautiful than all, are the tears of sorrow. They were shed at the side of the grave; they came into the eye at the sight of an empty chair. How unbearable

the world until relief came in a flood of tears! Only through tears do we find the sweetest comfort.

Thus, our devotions become more helpful when we hold this rosary of priceless treasure. These beads can be purchased of no merchant; they cannot be blessed by any priest. They were wrought in the fires of our suffering, and, because we trusted him, they were blessed of God. They cannot heal the soul—only God can do that; but they help heal the soul by quickening our memories and reviving our past experiences. Let no one rob you of the beneficent influences of deep feelings, whether of joy or sorrow, for we are never so much in the spirit of prayer as when we hold in our hands the rosary of tears.

XXV

THE HEARTHSTONE OF THE HEART

SPEAKING to a young man who was about to assume the more weighty responsibilities of religious work and living, Paul bade him stir up the coals of genius, and build a fire of enthusiasm that would warm and set aglow with holy zeal his every endeavor. "I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee." As the housewife stirs the living coals out of the dead ashes of the old fireplace, and fans them until they glow with sparkling fervor, setting aflame the newly placed faggots, making the room radiant with good cheer as shadows dance along the walls and ice melts from the frost-screened windowpanes, so out of the dead ashes of past enthusiasm he was to stir up the living coals of his best gifts until they snapped, and sparkled, and burst aflame, filling the heart with brightness, and creating an atmosphere that would melt the ices of indifference from the windows of his soul, and give him a clear vision of a great wide world. Yea, as in the days of Paul, one would take a dying torch, and placing it to his lips, pour out his breath upon it until

it burst in flame, that he might have a torch of burning fire to guide his footsteps through the darkness of the starless midnight or to flash a message to the people living upon the distant hilltop, or to kindle the fireplace wood until the cold corners of the house breathed a hearty welcome to the tired and frozen travelers, so the young man was to take the divine elements of the soul, breathe upon them the breath of prayer and devotion, until they blazed and burned and cast abroad their helpful influence.

Within each human heart, however covered with the smothering ashes of sin, are God-made sparks of celestial fire that long to rise on wings of flame and make heroic battle with oppressive darkness. There are too many lives which, through carelessness, never burn bright, but, like smoldering flax, slowly eat themselves away, darkening and corrupting the very air they should illumine. When they began the Christian life they were radiant with hope, beaming with enthusiasm, and flashing with chivalric courage; but the spirit of worldliness choked and smothered them, until now, like the dead hearthstone of some shell-torn house upon the battle line, they offer to a worn-out world no hope of hospitality. To guard against this choking of the soul, this smoldering of genius, this reckless burning out of the priceless gifts of

God, Paul urges all young men to stir up these coals and fan them into radiant and glowing character.

It is not the will of God that any life be formal and indifferent. How much all forms of life, plant, and animal owe to the hidden fires within the bosom of the planet, no scientist has been bold enough to state; but this we know about mankind, without the inner fires of burning thought and all-consuming zeal there is no productivity. And no life need be cold-hearted. For the hearthstone of every heart there are three divine qualities that should burn with all the intensity and fervor as in the hearts of ancient seer and prophet.

There is the quality of Faith that makes God real. To many people God seems so far away that it is an impossibility for him to be a very important factor in their daily lives. He is a sort of good-natured Generality, to whom they may address petitions of greater or less degree of piety, without fear of being embarrassed by an answer. Should it be announced with certainty that at a given time the accumulated prayers of a twelvemonth would be answered, fifty per cent of the people would be afraid to face the hour. Some have prayed for purity of heart, but if there is anything in the world that they do not want, it is purity of

heart. Nothing would be more embarrassing to carry into their haunts of enjoyment and more difficult to explain to their companions. Others have prayed for God to accept them as living sacrifices, yet sainthood, to them, is as shocking as yellow fever. I once knew a man who prayed "Let justice rule supreme." It is a pleasing phrase and a consummation to be devoutly wished for, but had it been answered in this particular case, the man who uttered the prayer would have gone to the penitentiary. Few people deny the existence of a God, but many live as though there were no God. But these are not the real lives. The men who really live and give a homelike feeling to the world are those who have stirred up the embers of their faith until they burn with an all-consuming warmth that makes God a guest of honor. To such souls God is marvelously real, and they rejoice to have him dwell within. When faith once lays hold on the Almighty no other experience is half so real. One needs read about it in no book, consult no priest or preacher, nor plead with friend to lend the information, for he knows it for himself. Sitting beside the hearthstone of a living, flaming faith, our hands feeling the pressure of that mighty Hand that never harms but always serves, our souls rejoice with unmeasured joy to realize that we are in the

presence of God who knows and understands, and who not only walks the weary ways with us, but gladly dwells within.

There is the quality of hope that makes heaven real. So long as hope burns within the heart there is no fear of winter winds, but when hope dies the soul dies. How gladly may old age look over the world in which it spent the four-seasoned life of toil! Here is the spring of life where the daisies grew and the cowslips scattered gold about the feet. Yonder the harvest fields of manhood's power in which a bared arm of strength gathered the treasures of the soil while right merry thoughts centered upon a nearby cottage toward which he knelt each time he tied a band of gold about the garnered sheaf. Yonder the carefully planted violets grow upon a tiny mound, bright children of the sun making battle with the cold shadows of a marble slab. Now the autumn time of life fades into wintry quiet. The song of the brook is hushed beneath ever-thickening ice, the trees are robbed of color, the fields are trackless wastes of snow. The four seasons of life are growing to a close, the last afternoon is coming to its twilight, and yet one is not sad. The fires of hope still burn upon the hearthstone of the heart, and fill the soul with the light of its immortal home. Heaven is not a far-away land,

vague with mystery, and dim with distance, but a place that is real and very close. We breathe its scented air, and bathe in its golden light while hope is burning divinely bright within our hearts.

The hope of heaven does more tnan offer us compensation for the wrongs of life; it gives man an intelligent interpretation of the things of time. Until one believes his citizenship is in heaven he cannot intelligently perform his daily task. The painting that lacks perspective is a daub; the hopeless life is dismal failure. Therefore, as one prizes the best, he should stir up the gift of hope until heaven is as real as home.

There is the quality of love that makes the world seem real. At the fireside of a loving heart, one readily learns the true secrets of the world in which he dwells. There is nothing so potent as love to give vision to the soul, clearness to the eye, effective service to the hand. Then stir up the gifts of love. Build in your heart the fires of a quenchless affection that refuses to believe the worst, that will never give consent that anyone has gone too far in sin for reclamation, but ever believes that one more touch of kindness will bring the person back to God; a love that gladly sacrifices everything of value in his effort to redeem that which has no value; a love that knows no selfish interest and

daily seeks the welfare of another. Then will the world cease to be hazy and fantastic, but will be as real as the ones of your own household, who gather each evening hour about your fireside.

Let not your love for one single individual die; it robs you of too great a joy. Warm up your hearts by allowing the fires of faith in God, hope of heaven, and love for all men to blaze and burn in high, exultant flames that know not how to die. Without it your life will be as barren as the deserted house through which the winter winds pass undisturbed. Make your life homelike by keeping bright the hearthstone of the heart.

XXVI

THE UNOARED SEA

Each one spends his childhood playing upon the golden sands of an unoared sea, over which in the after years he must find his way to shipwreck or safe harbor.

How little does childhood in its helplessness know of life! Pleased with simple things, it greets the world with gladness, and shouts for very joy when finding a tinted shell or bit of seaweed. With spades of tin it undertakes to dig a hole "clear through the earth," and smiles in contemplation of a vision of the Chinese sky. With chains of sand it undertakes to bind the rushing waters of the tide which granite cliff and flinty rock cannot subdue. The child undertakes great things while he himself is not strong enough to withstand the smallest wave, but, leaving his unfinished task, runs homeward at the coming of the tide. The waves roar with laughter and the spray sparkles with merriment as they destroy the feeble efforts of his puny hands. Childhood knows little of the unoared sea of life whose marvelous power of wave and

tide threatens to destroy all the childish and manly efforts of his life.

The desires of the sea may be fulfilled. With youthful enthusiasm and unguarded courage he may make fatal venture and be lost. There are many such of wholesome soul and worthy purpose whose most cherished hopes and plans came to shipwreck and disaster. The seas of life are strewn with wreckage. Yet one must not be pessimistic and forget that the raging sea is not omnipotent. With all its wild dashing waves and boisterous winds it is not as strong as that little lad may become. The weakest child may yet be able to dig a pit large and deep enough to bury all the swollen waves; and build a cable of sand strong enough to bind securely the rising and the falling tides. Some day, over the calm and quiet waters of a perfectly conquered sea, this tiny lad may pass into the harbor of safety and success.

Man was not made for the sea, but the sea was made for man. Man was created with the gift of complete dominion over all the world in which he finds himself. Standing like a discoverer upon the shores of his own unoared sea of life, it is his to conquer, for each individual faces a sea newly created, whose waves have never been cut by the prow of any boat. No two people sail the same sea. Each person faces

a life as original as it is unknown, but one that is singularly suited to himself. Age may be enriched with much dearly bought and valuable experiences, and be most helpful in counseling youth, but age can never fully understand the child, or youth, who stands upon the sun-kissed sands of the unoared sea of his own individual life. The beauty and pathos of life is that each one must solve the problem for himself.

This does not mean that the training and counseling of youth should be neglected. The ennobling influences of a godly home with Christian parents; the steady, guiding hand of school and college; the inspiration of good books and imperial thinking, as well as the soul-strengthening forces of the church, are all of most vital importance. They should never be omitted from any life. These are things to which each child has an unquestioned right. All the forces for good, of earth and sea and sky, must be centered upon the ambitious but ofttimes thoughtless youth, that he may recognize and faithfully employ the agencies created for his service and success.

The best that education can do is to help the individual to help himself. Education is not a compass by which to steer his craft; it is not the rudder that determines the course; neither is it the propelling power that drives it through the

waves against an adverse wind. God has made especial provision for these equipments. The chart is the inspired Word; the compass, a divinely guided conscience; the rudder, a will surrendered fully to the will of God; while the power that propels lies in the skillful using of two plain oars that God has placed within his easy reach. Education is the intellectual training that enables him to use these agencies in the most efficient manner.

Many centuries of experience and experiment have produced no labor-saving machinery for reaching the harbor of success. If one would make successful voyage, he must be willing to grasp the oars with his own hands, bend his back to heavy strain, employing all his mental, physical, and spiritual power to the task of making good. It is not a joy ride or a pleasure trip. There is a joy unspeakable in the task, but it comes not from without but from the consciousness within that one is winning in a moral strife. This consciousness will be found to be the chiefest of life's joys. None shall excel it this side the welcome we shall receive when safely anchored in the presence of our God, and even then this consciousness will be the inspiration of the heavenly song. Life must be considered not so much a pleasure as a struggle, but a worthy struggle, that sends the blood

tingling through the veins, and builds the tissues of a noble character.

After the training in life's fundamentals the choosing of the oars is the most important thing. The craft in which one sails is character, built to weather any storm on any wind-swept sea. The haven is God's homeland of the soul. The oars are varied, and the success or failure of the voyage, the safety or shipwreck of character, a victorious landing or sinking beneath the waves of obscurity, depend entirely upon the choosing of these oars by means of which his life energies are to be directed.

To this end all the educational influences of home and school and college must be directed. Youth must be taught the value of an intelligent choice of the instruments through which his powers shall flow. He must not be led by fancy or prejudice or by the words of dishonest men who have oars to sell. He must not choose by the color of the paint or beauty of their decorations. He must not listen to the honeyed words of an evil one whose sole purpose is his destruction. Leaving the sands of childhood and starting voyage upon the unoared sea of life is a moment in which all earth and heaven are concerned, and therefore the choice of oar must not be left to chance or fortune. He must know that all the proffered oars are not alike, and

that false teachers profit from the wreckage of the boats they set adrift. He must know that a broken oar means a drifting boat, and that no drifting boat can ride a storm-tossed sea. All the difference between heaven and hell is in that moment of decision when he picks up his chosen oars and begins to use them as his own.

There are two oars that never fail when once grasped by a hand that is firm and true. The first oar is called Virtue. With this oar of moral excellency, of pure heart and clean hands, with this oar of real integrity of character and purity of soul, man's energies are never wasted as he makes battle against opposing powers. The real sinfulness of impurity is its resultant waste of strength. Behold the wan faces, sunken eyes, wasted energies, emaciated forms, staggering steps of weakness, and the uncertainty and indecision of character, and one sees the consequences of abusing the laws of purity. But virtue means more than purity of body, it means absolute cleanliness of heart and mind and purpose.

The second oar is Righteousness. Unrighteousness is the abuse and waste of power. The New Testament word for sin is "missing the mark," energy that is wasted by not being carefully and accurately directed. To be upright in life, free from wrong and injustice, to yield to

everyone his just dues, is to have a means for directing strength and vital energy that never fails to bring the desired result.

Two oars—"Virtue," rightness with God; "Righteousness," rightness with man—two oars that have never been known to break no matter how much a great soul bends them in his battle with the waves. Two oars that have never yet failed to bring the ship to harbor.

This, then, is the opportunity of the church, not to manufacture oars, but to aid youth and maiden to choose the ones that God hath made. They are not new inventions, but as old as God and rugged as the Hand that made them. Firmly grasped and resolutely employed, the harbor is made in safety, although the voyage be upon a hitherto unoared sea.

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